

SPORT POLICY IN LEBANON, 1975 to 2004

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MPhil

2009

MPhil in Sport History

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ABSTRACT

Lebanon is a unique country. Its small size, numerous communities, geographical context, history of conflicts and foreign invasions contributes in making this research a unique study in the field of humanities and social sciences. The study of such a case gets even more complex when it comes to the evaluation of the position of sport in this society; especially since the Lebanese Government has never considered sport and the betterment of sport among its priorities.

Lebanese sport reflects all the different parameters of the Lebanese scene: economic difficulties, administrative problems, religious and political tension. The situation of sport in this country is rendered even more complicated by the fact that the budget granted to sport is relatively very small; a fact that is not only detailed but is proven to have direct effects on the low position that Lebanon has in the different international sport rankings. Academically, research on this field is also still very limited and the very few works done in this domain are more descriptive than analytic.

The aims of this thesis, new in its kind, is, first, to do an analysis on the sport policy administered in Lebanon from 1975 to 2004, and, then, after defining its different characteristics, propose a plan for development.

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List of abbreviations

ADF: Arab Deterrent Force

AFC: Asian Football Confederation

AIBA: Association Internationale de Boxe Amateur (International Boxing Association)

AUB: American University of Beirut

AUST: American University of Science & Technology

BAU: Beirut Arab University

B.C: Before Christ

CREPS: Centres Régionaux d'Education Populaire et de Sport (Regional Sport and Popular Educational Centre)

ENSEPS: Ecole Normale Supérieure d'Education Physique et Sportive (High College of Physical Education and Sport)

ESPN: Entertainment and Sports Programming Network

FIBA: Fédération Internationale de Basketball (International Basketball Federation)

FIFA: Fédération Internationale de Football Association (International Football Federation)

FINA: Federation Internationale de Natation (International Swimming Federation)

GAA: Gaelic Athletic Association

GAISF: General Assembly of International Sport Federation

ICC: International Cricket Council

IDF: Israel Defence Forces

IFBB: International Federation of Bodybuilders

IGF: International Golf Federation
IHF: International Handball Federation
INBA: International Natural Bodybuilding Association
INS: Institut Nationale du Sport (National Sport Institute)
INSEP: Institut Nationale du Sport et de l'Education Physique (National Institute for Physical Education and Sport)
IOC: International Olympic Committee
IRA: Irish Republican Army
IRB: International Rugby Board
LAU: Lebanese American University
LBCI: Lebanese Broadcasting Company International
LBP: Lebanese Pounds
LF: Lebanese Forces
LOC: Lebanese Olympic Committee
LRLF: Lebanese Rugby League Foundation
MLB: Major League Baseball
MNF: Multinational Force
NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NBA: National Basketball Association
NCAA: National Collegiate Athletic Association
NCTC: National Coaching and Training Centre
NDU: Notre-Dame University
NFL: National Football League
NSF: National Salvation Front
OTV: Orange Television
PES: Physical Education and Sport

PLA: Palestinian Liberation Army
PLO: Palestine Liberation Organisation
PSP: Progressive Socialist Party
SSNP: Syrian Social Nationalist Party
STAPS: Sciences et Techniques des Activités Physiques et Sportives (Sports and Physical Education faculty)
TV: Television
UK: United Kingdom
UL: Université Libanaise (Lebanese University)
UN: United Nations
UNIFIL: United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UOB: University of Balamand
UPA: Université des Pères Antonins (Antonine University)
U.S: United States (Of America)
U.S.A: United States of America
USEK: Université Saint-Esprit Kaslik (Holy Spirit University)
USJ: Université Saint Joseph (St.Joseph University)
WNBA: Women National Basketball Association
WNBF: World Natural Bodybuilding Federation

Introduction

Modern Lebanon has emerged after centuries of internal and external oppositions and conflicts. The successive foreign powers¹ that have occupied the country and the multitude of different religious communities that have co-existed inside Lebanon, have not only contributed to the emergence of a modern nation that enjoys a very rich diverse cultural past, but have also founded a republic governed by a very fragile balance among its communities. This fact has enabled and even encouraged the occupiers, throughout history, to exploit this civil strife to their advantage; consequently, strengthening their foreign policy². These foreign powers, for example, could ignite the flame that would build into a civil war. Later, these same forces would, brazenly, interfere to extinguish, under the pretext of helping in consolidating the internal peace, the flame that they have slyly kindled. It was under the umbrella of this inherent legacy of internal weaknesses, and the almost ‘natural’ dependency of the Lebanese Government on the foreign powers that the independence of Lebanon was declared in 1943³.

¹ See: -Kamal Salibi, *The Modern History of Lebanon* (Worcester and London: Ebenezer Baylis and Son, Limited, The Trinity Press, 1965) pp.3-120.

- Kamal Salibi, *A House Of Many Mansions. The History of Lebanon Reconsidered.* (I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 1993) pp.200-216.

² See Farid El Khazen, *The Breakdown Of The State In Lebanon* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 1999) p.247.

³ See The Lebanese Constitution, translated by Gabriel M. Bustros B.Sc. (Econ) London ‘Bureau of Lebanese and Arab Documentation’ 1973.

This thesis will examine one aspect of modern Lebanon's development, namely the paramount difficulties that the Lebanese Government faced, in the second half of the twentieth century; especially during the 1970s, in establishing a policy that would uphold sport in the country. This study, by analyzing the economical, social and political factors that influence Lebanon's future sport policy and development, will make clear how far behind is Lebanon, compared with other countries, with respect to the international 'league table'. Later, an assessment of the possibilities of setting a unified and competitive sport program that would be on a par with the international standards will be presented.

However, to understand the deep-rooted complexity of the aforementioned Lebanese situation, it is imperative to know the history of the country. Lebanon has been inhabited, for more than 7000 years, by the Neolithic's and Chalcolithic's fishing communities. Historians state that the Phoenicians, who are considered to be the 'legitimate' ancestors of the Lebanese, and who have originally emigrated from Babylon, have settled in this region around 3000-2500 B.C⁴. Ironically, these Lebanese ancestors already had the characteristics of their descendants: they were strongly dependent on foreign powers. The Phoenicians did not establish large kingdoms, but limited their states to single cities, the rulers of which accepted compromises in their relationship with their stronger neighbors, to whom they had to pay taxes in order to have peace and the freedom to trade.

⁴ [In Arabic] See Labib Boutros, *Phenician Sport And Its Influence In The Creation Of The Olympic Games* (Beirut: New codmos edition, 1974) pp.11-17.

This weak position, made the Phoenicians easy preys to foreign invasions. In 2000 B.C, they were invaded by the Amorites, who came from the East. Around 1800 B.C, the city-states of Phoenicia became vassals under Egypt. The latter lost its control over Phoenicia around 1100B.C. After more than 200 years of independence, specifically, in 867 B.C, Phoenicia was invaded by the Assyrian. Freedom from Assyria was gained in 612 B.C. However, this freedom was not to last long, for in 590 B.C, Phoenicia was conquered by Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylonia. In 539 B.C, it was the turn of Persia, and in 333 B.C Phoenicia was conquered by Alexander the Great, under who it played a far less prominent role in trade, and the Phoenician culture became heavily influenced by the Hellenistic one. With the conquest of the Romans, 300 years later, in 64 B.C, the Phoenician civilization disappeared, and this part of the world, became to be known as ‘Lebanon’. Like Phoenicia, Lebanon remained weak when it had to deal with stronger neighbors. In the 4th century, the first spark of religious strife began. During the declining year of the Roman Empire, the theology and the organization of the new religion of Christianity was developed. Christians of Lebanon, the Maronites, professed that Jesus was both man and God. For this central question, they were violently persecuted by Romans⁵.

In 637, Lebanon was conquered by the Arabs. Religious freedom was guaranteed by the new rulers, who governed from Damascus, Syria’s capital. In 1098, the first Crusader kingdom was established⁶. In the following two centuries, Lebanon was divided between two crusader kingdoms: Tripoli, and Jerusalem. During this period

⁵ See Kamal Salibi, *A House Of Many Mansions. The History Of Lebanon Reconsidered.* (I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 1993) pp.200-216.

⁶ [In French] See Amin Maalouf, *Les Croisades Vues Par Les Arabes* (Paris: Jean Claude Lattès Edition, 1983) Part I.

the Maronite Christians incurred more strength and were integrated into the Church of Rome. In 1197, the Moslems, under the leadership of the Ayyubids of Egypt, reinstated their authority and, in 1289, all of Lebanon was controlled by the Egyptian rulers, the Mamluks⁷. In 1516, Lebanon came under the control of the Ottoman Empire, and remained so for four centuries. During this period, Lebanon enjoyed some autonomy, and the internal affairs were administered by a local dynasty, the Maans. In 1697, the Shihabs dynasty took over the local power of Lebanon. In 1842, groups from the Druze religion removed the Shihabs from power; however, Lebanon was still a part of the Ottoman Empire. In 1858, an important civil war between the Druze and Christians broke out, resulting in much bloodshed and creating a social division that was to last until the end of the 20th century⁸. In 1860, this civil war ended, with the Druze emerging as dominant. Lebanon was divided for the first time since the arrivals of the Ottomans. What happened at this stage played an extremely important role in shaping the destiny of the future state: a state governed by internal division and manipulated by the foreign intervention. Istanbul intervened on behalf of the Moslems and the Druze while the Christians were granted autonomy over their province and were protected by the French.

In 1920, at the end of the First World War, the Ottoman Empire's authority on this region (Lebanon, Syria and the Turkish province of Antakya), was replaced by the French mandate: the Republic of Lebanon became a French protectorate. The political power, at that time, was divided among the Shiites, the Sunnites and the

⁷ See Kamal Salibi, *A house Of Many Mansions. The History Of Lebanon Reconsidered*. (I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 1993) pp.200-216.

⁸ See Kamal Salibi, *The Modern History Of Lebanon* (Worcester and London: Ebenezer Baylis and Son, Limited, The Trinity Press, 1965) pp.3-120.

Christians. However, by collaborating and having the strongest ties with the French, it was the Christians who benefited most from this structure⁹. This Christian hegemony was to last several decades, and was one of the major causes of the next round of the political conflicts in the second half of the 20th century. In 1943, Lebanese independence was declared, and in 1944, it was recognized by the French Government-in-exile in London.

To be able to achieve success in the establishment of a nation, the people of Lebanon decided, in 1943, to create a republic where the main characteristic would be an appropriate and fair division of powers between the various communities. It was therefore officially decided in that year that the President of the Republic would be a Christian Maronite, the Prime Minister a Muslim Sunnite and the Assembly President a Muslim Shiite. The other communities (Druzes, Christian Orthodox, Christian Catholics, Armenians...) would also have a quota of politicians that would represent them in the government¹⁰. At that time, Lebanese politicians thought that this compromise was essential to the political stability of the country. For citizens living in a 21st century modern democracy, where a person is supposed to reach a political position as a result of his capacities and merit rather than to his ethnic or religious belonging, this system of religious quotas inside the government might be seen as an illogical and perverse constitutional arrangement. However, what seems to be inappropriate probably everywhere else could easily find its legitimacy in Lebanon. For Lebanon is a unique country, and it is next to impossible to find, in the whole world, a small place of 10452 square kilometers

⁹ See Kamal Salibi, *The Modern History Of Lebanon* (Worcester and London: Ebenezer Baylis and Son, Limited, The Trinity Press, 1965) pp.151-207.

¹⁰ See The Lebanese Constitution, translated by Gabriel M. Bustros B.Sc. (Econ) London 'Bureau of Lebanese and Arab Documentation' 1973.

embracing 18 different religious communities. However, despite these measures aimed at establishing a balance between the different communities, tension remained among them and it had often led to major conflicts, which, in turn, resulted in a constantly unstable political and economic situation.

It is commonly believed that sport should not be part of politics. But, as the history of the 20th century has shown us, sport has always been the mirror of the social, political and economic climate of a country¹¹. This has never been truer than in the case of Lebanon. The relationship between sport and society constitutes the central theme of the present thesis, which is, in turn, an innovatory study of a country where sport has been long-neglected. In **Chapter 1**, I propose a Lebanese ‘carte de visite’. The aim is to give an account on the geopolitical, historical, social and religious status of the country. **Chapter 2** will be devoted to a definition of the structure of Lebanese sport, based on the country’s geographical, geopolitical, historical, social and religious characteristics. **Chapter 3** will present an analysis of the difficulties faced by the Lebanese sports. This chapter constitutes the core of the work because it focuses on the main aspect of sport in Lebanon. Although there is no official distribution of powers according to religious community inside the sport federations, clubs and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, there exist, however, compromises that were or are conducted to promote an internal ‘peaceful climate’ inside the various sport institutions. For example, in the 33 sport federations registered in the Lebanese Olympic Committee, there is a stipulation that states that if some federations are mainly made of Muslims, provision should be made for the

¹¹ See Alfred Erich Senn, *Power, Politics And The Olympic Games* (Human Kinetics, 1999) pp.49-287.

other to be mainly composed of Christians¹². These informal arrangements, very often done ‘under the table’, where the main goal is, as in Lebanese politics, to allow every community to have a portion of the ‘cake’, though this procedure will very often lead to situations of unclear apparatus, lack of professionalism, lack of transparency, corruption and religious division in the country as a whole and consequently among the Lebanese sport body. **Chapter 4** analyses the elements behind the Lebanese sport successes during the post-war period, and **Chapter 5** is about the proposed perspectives for development. In the **Conclusion**, the singularity of the situation of the Lebanese sport is discussed. In other words, my thesis will answer the question: Are there other places in the world that have the same problem? In considering this question, a comparison between Lebanon and other ‘troubled’ places such as Ireland, South Africa and Bosnia-Herzegovina will be made.

The 1975-2004 period was for this study because in 1975 the Lebanese Civil War broke out. It was war that was a direct outcome of the Lebanese political and religious divisions, a state that was mirrored in the field of sport, in the dismantling of the structure and organisation of Lebanese sport as a harmonious institution. I will stop my analysis in the year 2004 because in 2005, events such as the assassination of Prime Minister Rafic Hariri (February 2005) and the withdrawal of the Syrian Army (April 2005) opened the door to a new era in the Lebanese history; an era during which the general atmosphere, whether political or social, is difficult to discern, and a proper analysis of events is difficult to implement.

¹² See the interview with the person in charge of squash in ‘The escape’ club Georges El-Hajj in February 2003 in Beirut, Lebanon.

Although a multitude of works can be found on the Lebanese political history, as well as on those countries that have a history of conflicts, academic studies on Lebanese sport are inadequate, and touch on limited spectrum of important issues. There is no comprehensive scientific study of Lebanese sport, and those that do exist tend to be descriptive summaries of events¹³. The analysis of the existing state of Lebanese sport that follows draws heavily on information taken from official governmental documents, laws, articles, surveys and interviews done with Lebanese sportspersons, including elite athletes, and the heads of sport federations and clubs. This material composed of administrative documents related to the country's main sport organisations (such as the Lebanese Olympic Committee and the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports), and the verbal accounts of practical experiences of Lebanese athletes, has not always been easy to access. Hence, to be able to gather such information, I had to obtain official permission and make arrangements for interviews, which was not an easy task, considering the Lebanese sport bureaucracy. The work was achieved after many hours of telephone calls, car driving, interviewing and typing. As may be imagined, this was made even more difficult when the civil disturbances started in February 2005 following the assassination of Prime Minister Rafic Hariri, and which resulted in the closure of many sections of the country for the following two and a half years.

In its simplest form, the history of sport is composed of sport facts: list of trophy-

¹³ - [In Arabic] Boutros Labib, *Lebanese Village Games* (Beirut: New codmos edition, 1986) pp.3-59.

- [In French] Sacre Joseph *'Le Sport Au Liban'*, (Beirut, Joseph Reaydé Edition, 1980) pp.10-246.

winners, game scores and chronological accounts of teams' performances.

This 'chronicle and number' approach is certainly valuable in terms of factual information, but because it does not deal with wider events, it is not fit for academic research and methodology. What is important in scientifically studying the history of sport is the ability to know how to interpret the basic information. Admittedly, 'who won what, where, and by how many' provides essential information for substantial number of fans of a particular sport; however, academic/scientific study of the history of sport should go much beyond these lists of results. For Example, if we take the 1883 English Football Association Cup final when Blackburn Olympic beat the Old Etonians by two goals to one, the score is a basic sport fact, and the information that the Old Etonians elite public school students had been defeated by a team which included a plumber, three weavers, a spinner and an iron-foundry worker, and that the game of soccer was not dominated anymore by middle-class players, is an aspect of sport history.

The result also marked a geographical shift in the location of the playing power in that it was the first time that the Cup team had come to north of England, since its inception in 1871. And the fact that the game was starting to be watched and followed by an increasing crowd of northern England working-class has opened the way to professionalism in English football.

The field of sport history took long to establish itself¹⁴. For many years, academics shied away from the subject, leaving the field to journalists and enthusiastic amateurs whose celebratory, nostalgic, often anecdotal, and generally uncritical approach helped sustain the belief that sport history was not suited for any serious scientific study. However, this outlook has changed during the last few decades. Though no comprehensive study exists, the overall standards of sport history have

¹⁴ See Polley M, Moving the Goal Posts (London : Routledge, 1998) pp.166-172.

considerably risen, and are today appreciated by university presses and quality commercial publishers. This transformation has resulted from a combination of factors, the booming interest in social history, the expanding of the sport industry, and the increasing awareness of the impact of sport on society as a whole.

The study of the history of sport encompasses the fundamental issues and topics that have shaped sport throughout history such as the ancient games, sport in the middle-ages and the renaissance period, the birth of modern sport, professionalism in sport, commercialization of sport, international development of sport and the relation between sport and the media. Although sport has ‘more or less’ existed for more than 20 centuries (some historians refer to the era of the Roman Empire as being a period of breaking into sport), the principal focus of this field is on what has mainly happened since the 18th century, because it is during this time that sport has become what it is today.

Thus, the birth of modern sport constitutes a central pillar of the historical study of sport for it depicts the shift from traditional to modern forms¹⁵. It is impossible to understand what is special about ‘modern’ sport unless we understand the kinds of sports that preceded the formation of national and international sport institutions such as the English Football Association (1863), the Rugby Football Union (1871), the Amateur Athletic Association (1880), and the FIFA (‘Fédération Internationale de Football Association – 2004). In Europe, sport in the middle-ages was mostly

¹⁵ See : - Holt Richard, *Sport And The British* (Oxford University Press, 1989) pp.12-p135.
- Guttman A, *From Ritual To Record : The Nature Of Modern Sports* (Columbia, 1978) pp.15-57.

warrior sports, and who used their free time to train for their main job: fighting. At the time, these sports used to show how skilled and brave were the warriors of a certain region. While the 'joust', fox hunting, cudgeling, among others were reserved for the aristocrats. With the arrival of the gunpowder, these sports disciplines had much less impact on the outcome of a war. The way of fighting changed and so did the forms of sports. Most of the changes occurred in Britain; especially, once it became the first industrialized country. The economic and social changes introduced by this industrial development led to the emergence of a large middle-class in the 19th century, a new national system of education, and a new transport and communication systems, all of which made possible this birth of modern sport. The British population, from 1800 to 1900, grew from 8 to 40 Million. Due to the economic and industrial development, the nature of work changed. Sedentary and indoor work as well as outdoor work developed. The non-standard, non-regular, violent aspects of traditional and rural sports were replaced by inner-cities activities that had their own specific styles and regulations and which could be played in limited spaces with controlled violence. The first lesson learned then is that sport always follows the economical, political and social developments of any given civilization.

One of the main aspects that history of sport touched on is the process whereby sport was transformed into a 'real' economic sector, characterized by professionalisation and commercialisation¹⁶. Sport historians have analyzed the various characteristics of this economical development. One example of this process is the establishment of trade unions within sport, complete with their

¹⁶ See Cox Richard, Jarvie Grant and Vampley Wtay, Encyclopedia of British Sport (Abc-Clio, 2000) pp.1-430.

paternalist and elitist system and the different structure and functions. Like any union, the sport union has provided the twin functions of a trade society: seeking to negotiate for the improvement of the working conditions and building a friendly society, which provides welfare and financial assistance to its members. What has been evident, though, is that the friendly society's functions have been more easily accepted by sport-governing bodies, and employers than the trade society rules. Attempts to improve pay and conditions often brought unions into conflict with the management. Beyond these two main functions, some sport unions have developed a number of other functions: recruitment service, agency, competition organizer and medical provider. Despite all the difficulties, sport unions have been able to formalize the professionalisation standards of sport, and to promote a mechanism of commercialisation that has spread into the whole world.

The actions taken by these unions have, in certain sports, found remarkable results. Actually, the rewards and culture of the early British football professionals was not markedly dissimilar from that of their counterparts in the industrial fields. For most of the 20th century, the maximum wage and additional forms of payment provided players with an income considerably higher than the better paid manual worker. However, while football workers earned more than those in the industry, they were poorly paid in comparison with other entertainers (movie stars, singers). It was only with the removal of the maximum-wage ordinance within the football association in 1961 that earnings began to rise to a level approaching that of the entertainers. Also, in the beginning, career in professional football was of a short term and employment was insecure; while loss of form or injury could quickly strip a footballer of his professional status. Things did improve over the course of the 20th century. Clubs were increasingly less likely to dismiss players at short notice, as is

the procedure followed with those who have manual work. Most players signed annual contracts, a procedure which was rare in industry. Footballers were also awarded benefits such as 15-week paid holidays and a post-career pension. Even though, and as of the beginning of the 21st century, footballers status has greatly improved, yet it is still ‘far’ from that of established professionals such as lawyers and doctors. Internationally, it was inherently understood that if any elite athlete is asked to achieve international results, he has to reach a professional status permitting him to train full-time for his sport. The history of sport has extensively covered this development and commercialisation of international sport.

Another dimension of this modernisation process has been the internationalisation of sport, and the spreading of its commercial operations across the world. The biggest example of this is the Summer Olympic Games. The first Summer Olympic Games was held in 1896. The concept were founded by the French Baron Pierre De Coubertin, who was inspired by the British public schools’ cult of games, the amateur ideal and the idea of a ‘healthy mind in a healthy body’ as character forming. In what became the first International Olympic Committee (IOC) meeting in 1894 in the Sorbonne University, he stated that ‘character is not formed by the mind, but primarily by the body.’¹⁷ And that ‘the important thing is not winning but taking part, the essential thing in life is not conquering but fighting well.’¹⁸ De Coubertin was also a strong supporter of amateurism. For him, amateurs had to ‘defend themselves against the spirit of lucre and professionalism that threatens to invade their lands.’ Therefore, for the first half of the 20th century, professionalism was banned from the games. Superstars athletes like Jim Thorpe and Jesse Owens were fired from their Olympic delegation because they have

¹⁷ See archives of the official website of the International Olympic Committee.

¹⁸ See Guttman, The Olympics : a history of the Modern Games (III. UP 1992), pp.7-20.

earned money from a success attained in sport. De Coubertin wanted also to revive what he understood to have been the Olympic ideal of the ancient Greek games, where (he thought) athletes competed only for the honor and pride of their respective towns. But these were misinterpretations and fallacies that contemporary sport historians have rejected¹⁹. The athletes in ancient Greece were not amateurs; they were trained in a professional way, and the ancient games were governed by controversies and drug abuse. An 'Ancient Olympian' champion could easily become rich and famous. Apart from receiving an important financial or material reward (money or land), he was honored in the celebrations and banqueting at Olympia and his journey back home was a triumphal procession. Frequently, a city which had been made victorious, constructed a breach in the walls under which the victorious athlete would triumphantly enter and not by the common path. His fame was likely to spread throughout Greece. Sculptors carved his figure in stone, and poets wrote odes commemorating his achievements. Some cities also used to hire 'foreign athletes' to win in the Olympic events. This is related to what was mentioned above, as sport always follows the economical, political and social developments of any given civilization, and that it is not different from the other sectors of society, men adopts the same behavior towards failure and success. The anti-commercial ideal of De Coubertin were therefore destined to fail, but it does nonetheless provide an interesting counterpoint to the growing tendency in late 19th and early 20th century Europe to see sport as a vehicle for commercial gain. Indeed, in the second part of the 20th century, the Olympic movement had to face a very strong opponent: television. Actually, when asked about the games television broadcasted, newly elected IOC President Avery Brundage stated that 'we, in the IOC did very good without the television

¹⁹ See : - Emmet A.Rice, A brief history of Physical Education (United States of America: A.S. Barnes and Company INC, 1952) pp.30-37.

- [In Arabic] Labib Boutros, Physical Education in Ancient Greek, (Beirut: Feghali, 1979) pp.96-113.

for 60 years and will do very well without it for the next 60 years to come’²⁰. For this event, there was no financial deal. The games were used by Hitler to show the political superiority of the Nazi regime. For the first games of the post-world war period, the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) offered 2000 Pounds for the rights to broadcast the 1948 London Games. The money was however refused. In 1952 and 1956, the games that were held in Melbourne were not broadcasted. In 1960, in Rome, the Games were broadcasted live for the very first time. The television’s organizing committee received, for the broadcasting rights, the amount of one Million \$. An amount that was adhered to until 40 years later, in the Sydney Olympic Games, the amount of the profit estimated by the IOC was 1.2 Billion \$. Winning the bid for the Olympics Organisation is today a goal that the world’s biggest cities (Paris, London, New York, Moscow and Madrid) have all ‘fought’ to obtain. Organising the games will permit these cities to have a major worldwide exposure and, it is argued, to develop their infrastructure for the decades to come.

Academic work done in the field of sport history has led to the conclusion that professionalism and commercialisation of sport combined with its international development and its relation with the media have made it, especially today, in the era of globalization, an entire economical sector of its own. This industry has developed so much that today’s political leaders are all ready to host the major international sport competitions²¹ because they will generate profit that could benefit the whole economy. Developing ‘modern sport’ in a country requires the

²⁰ See : - ‘International Olympic Committee Review’ (N.34-35), p.22.

- ‘Sport Illustrated’ Magazine, ‘Avery Brundage : The Man Behind The Mask’, William Johnson (1980)

²¹ See Patrick Bouchet and Mohammad Kaach article, ‘Existe-t-il un « modèle sportif » dans les pays africains francophones ?’ STAPS revue N.65.

establishment of a global policy set by the government that includes the involvement (participation) of voluntary organizations (clubs, licensees), the initiative (organization, funding, financial and material support) of state sport representatives (Ministry of Youth and Sports, Olympic committee, federations) and the development of parallel commercial activities (sport-related medias, gate receipts, derivative products, merchandising)²².

One of the main questions to be posed in this thesis is to what extent have some of these features, evident in the development of sport in countries such as Britain, France and the USA, taken place in Lebanon? In other words, has this country's Sport history exhibited the kinds of features that allow us to conclude that 'modern sport' is implemented in Lebanon?

The history of sport, like all branches of history, still suffers from false, imperfect or missing information²³. This problem is rendered even more difficult when a research is undertaken on Lebanese sport, a subject never previously studied in detail. Because of the absence of academic work on this field, it was felt appropriate to gather information by means of interviews with various Lebanese

²² See: - Jeff Hill, 'Sport, Leisure and Culture in Twentieth Century Britain' (London : Macmillan, 2002) Part 1, 2 and 3.

- Ross McKibbin, 'Classes and Cultures : England 1918-1951' (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1998) pp.332-386.
- Richard Hold and Tony Mason, 'Sport in Britain, 1945-2000' (Oxford : Blackwell, 2000) chapters pp.63-168.
- Richard Holt, 'Sport and the British. A Modern History' (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1989) pp.212-262.
- Martin Polley. 'Moving the Goalposts. A History of Sport and Society Since 1945' (London : Routledge, 1998) pp12-85, p.111-135

²³ See : Marc Ferro, The Use and Abuse of History, or, How the Past is Taught (London and New York : Routledge, 2003) pp.131-157.

athletes (elite athletes, federations' members, coaches and managers...). These people gave statements on the situation and condition of the Lebanese sports based on their own experience and feelings. These testimonies were especially valuable when it came to giving their point of view on why a situation appeared to have gone wrong, what could be done in the future, and what is still lacking from the Lebanese sport. The persons were chosen because they were considered to be qualified to talk about their sports; their play, their coach or organisations at the highest national level and their sport Curriculum Vitae (national rankings, international rankings, and federation position), and who have great experience of the sport world in Lebanon. The factual information they provided (budget, salaries) have been verified by official sport federations' records and accounts, but of course their testimony, used for the analytic part of the work, might well be regarded as lacking in objectivity. This is a major problem when dealing with any kind of verbal testimony. For example, for many of those persons, the anger and frustration felt during their several years spent on the Lebanese sport field was vented out in their subjective and negative reactions and thus, the information they provided may not always form a sound guide to either the problems of the Lebanese sports or the solutions that might be appropriate to them. Moreover, these interviews were conducted in 2003, when the country was still under the Syrian political presence; in addition the tension resulting from the 15 years of war was still strongly felt and coloured the people's opinions. Hence, approaching the interviewees with issues related to the religious division inside the various Lebanese sport institutions was a highly sensitive task. A further problem that came to light in the interview relationship is the position of the interviewer: he was as subjective and biased as those he interviewed, and the ways in which the questions were conceived and framed inevitably betrayed the personal inclinations of the author of the thesis. Thus, the material gathered from the interviews is not by any

means ‘objective’. Like all historical evidence it has to be treated with critical caution, and as researchers we must recognise that ‘the truth’ is a difficult concept which might never be arrived at in its ultimate form. Nonetheless, given the gaps in the evidence in this particular case, it was felt to be worthwhile to include interview material in the source profile. In all cases, the interviewees were aware of the ways this material will be used in the thesis and their confidentiality was respected when they had to give feedback to particular questions. This research was always conducted in accordance with the University’s Human Research Ethics policy.

Therefore, taken individually, each one of these ‘face-to-face’ or ‘electronic’ interviews may be insufficient in terms of qualitative information. However, collected together, they constitute the core of information that would furnish the general impression felt by the country’s main sports ‘actors’ on the situation of sport in Lebanon. The gathering of the history of sport verbally has often been a ‘decent’ complement or even substitute to written history²⁴. It can record, through sound and video tapes, the living memories and feelings of ‘concerned’ people, which often brings a clearer idea of what has actually happened. Because of this clarity and interactivity, verbal gathering of history is a widely used tool in the field today. It has proven to be especially effective in local and family history. It permitted young people, for example, to explore their own community by bringing them into contact with their elders. It has also served to strengthen the sense of identity and contribution that older people have towards their society. Radio and television channels have frequently used verbal history to supplement their programmes. The verbal/oral history collections at local archives and libraries have

²⁴ See the official website of the Oral History Society, ‘What is Oral History?’, ‘How can oral history be used?’, ‘What is the Oral History Society?’.

also emerged as important new sources for all those interested in history. In the history of the Lebanese sports, where there is a very limited number of written academic references, and where the sport movement is a small 'local circle', searching for identity and recognition, verbal history is the main venue to secure essential source of information.

From January to September 2003, 16 face-to-face interviews were conducted. And from January 2003 to February 2008, another 21 electronic interviews (telephone and e-mail) were carried out. The 16 'face-to-face' discussions provided part of the material necessary to identify the difficulties that Lebanese sport is facing. From these 16 interviews, eight were done with elite athletes, seven with federation heads, and one with a club administrator. The eight athletes chosen were national champions in skiing, volleyball, football, wushu, squash, taekwondo, swimming and judo. The federation heads were from the canoe-kayak, football, judo, squash, athletics, volleyball and wushu federations. The club administrator was a manager in a multi-sport club called the 'The Escape'. From the eight athletes, there were four university students, two businessmen, one bank employee and one physical education teacher. Just two of them receive a part-time monthly salary being football and volleyball players. Of the seven federation's head, there were two lawyers, one physical education teacher, one businessman, one pilot, one engineer and only one who was working full-time in his federation job as the General Director of the Lebanese Football Federation. The club's administrator runs a business in advertising. The main questions asked to the federations' members deals with their own profile, the location of their federation, its structure composition, its annual budget, its functioning mechanism, the number of its full time and part time employees, its size in terms of clubs and licensees, its men and

women participation rate, what it organises at national or international level, the place of Lebanon in the international ranking of its sport, the difficulties that they are facing and what are their future plans. The questions asked to the elite athletes was on their own profile, their financial income (if any), the difficulties that they are facing and what are their future plans. For the club's administrator, the questions asked were on own profile, his role in the club, the budget this club has, the number of its full time and part time employees, the number of its licensees, its men and women participation rate and the difficulties it is facing. The 21 other 'electronic' interviews were done with different persons coming from inside and outside of the sport community. The goal was to collect information that could provide facts that were difficult to find in any academic work. For example, to compare the number of students registered in the Lebanese Baccalaureate and those registered in the French Baccalaureate (chapter IV), two phone calls have been made to an official at the French Embassy in Lebanon, who supplied me with the number of the Lebanese students that have passed the French Baccalaureate exam in Lebanon; and to a Lebanese Ministry of Education' advisor. For information about the United Kingdom's sport system, an email was sent to an administrator at UK Sport.

Thus, while recognising the limitations of verbal testimonies the author has been at pains to ensure that the evidence derived in this form is neither wildly inaccurate in factual terms nor excessively biased in relation to the judgements and opinions expressed. To achieve the work attempted in this thesis, though it is a primer work, but it was met with hurdles be it the lack of academic resources and the dependency on the limited secondary resources, or that the methodology involved something of a 'jig-saw puzzle' that gathered academic works related to the general history of the

country, official documents, alongside interview material that served to fill what otherwise would have been important gaps in evidence.

Chapter I- Lebanese geopolitical, historical, social and religious background

I-1- Geopolitical and social data of Lebanon²⁵

This section describes the small ‘size’ of Lebanon in terms of population, economy and development, and serves to contextualize the analysis of the sport resources to be conducted later in the thesis. These data will also help when a comparative study with other countries is undertaken.

²⁵ See United Nations official website, ‘member states’, 2004 statistics.



Map 1- Lebanon and its Middle-East neighbors²⁶

Compared to its neighbors, Lebanon is one of the smallest countries in the region. Only Cyprus, Bahrain and Qatar have a smaller size in terms of area and population. Lebanon's capital is Beirut. The main cities are Tripoli capital of north Lebanon, Sidon the capital of South Lebanon, Tyre and Zahlé the capital of the Bekaa. Lebanon is divided into 6 administrative divisions, 6 governorates called 'mohafazat' which are: Beirut, Bekaa, North Lebanon, South Lebanon, Mount

²⁶ See United Nations official website, 'maps', 2004 statistics.

Lebanon, Nabatiyé. The climate is Mediterranean; mild to cool, wet winters with hot, dry summers; the Lebanon Mountains experience heavy winter snows. The lowest point is the Mediterranean Sea (0 m). The highest point is Qurnat as Sawda' 3,088 m. This discrepancy in altitudes offers a certain particularity to Lebanon: the distance to the nearest mountain from the sea level is 1 hour by car. This phenomenon gives the people the opportunity to swim and ski in the same day, in months like April and May. This 'friendly' weather and easy capacity of internal traveling gives a natural advantage to the country. Thus, in case of political stability, Lebanon can develop a tourism and sport tourism policy that will constitute a major sector of its economy.



Map 2- Map of Lebanon²⁷

²⁷ See United Nations official website, 'maps', 2004 statistics.

However, the economical characteristics of Lebanon show that this developing country is prey to difficulties. This ‘unhealthy’ financial situation will undoubtedly not be in favor of a wealthy sport situation. Lebanon’s currency is the Lebanese pound (LBP). It has a relatively low value. (i.e. 1 \$US equals LBP1507). The public debt is very high. Actually, it is one the biggest problem that the Lebanese economy is facing. The public dept represents 200.7% of the Gross Domestic Product (2005 figures). Compared to developed countries, the unemployment rate (18%) and the population below poverty line (28%) are high (1999 figures). Within the budget, expenditure (\$6.595 billion) is higher than revenue (\$4.953 billion). The main reason of this large debt and deficit is that Lebanon imports (\$8.855 billion) are almost 5 times higher than its exports (\$1.782 billion) (2004 figures). One of the strength of Lebanese economy is its services sector. Indeed, the latter represents 67% of the Gross Domestic Product (the industry represents 21% and the agriculture 12%) (2000 figures). A predominant services sector is very often an economic aspect that the developed countries have. Despite its weak economy, Lebanon has entered the era of modernisation characterised by a strong tertiary sector only a couple of years after its independence. Indeed, in 1947, Lebanon became member of the International Monetary Fund and of the World Bank. In 1953, the Bank of Lebanon was established, and in the 1970’s, the country had an impressive boom in the number of banks and insurance companies. The turnovers of these companies are among the highest in Lebanon. The economy depends largely on them (especially the banks). The very few wealthy sports and clubs are mostly backed or sponsored by these groups.

Lebanon is an Arab country with more than 80% of its 3432000 population being Arab. Overall Lebanon’s population is divided into the following ethnic groups: the

Lebanese Arabs being 71.2% of the Lebanese population, the Palestinian Arabs 12.1%, the Armenian 6.8%, the Kurd 6.1% and the Others from diverse origins (eg Europeans descendants, Africans.) 3.8%. The official Language in Lebanon is Arabic. French and English are also spoken and taught in schools. Literacy, which is the percentage of those people aged over 15 year-old that can read and write, is 87.4% of the total population. Compared to a country like the United Kingdom, this figure is relatively low. However, from the 23 countries that represent the Arab world, Lebanon is ranked 3rd (only Jordan and Qatar have a higher Literacy).

Despite its relatively poor economy compared to rich countries like Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirate, Kuwait and Oman, Lebanon is in the pinnacle among the countries with a high literacy rating. This shows the quality of the educational institutions (schools and universities) that have a valued role in the country's society. Later on in this thesis, we will also see the impact that the major Lebanese schools have on sport.

We will now turn attention to the main aspect of the country's society: The religious groups and the divisions that result from them.

I-2- The influence of the religious communities²⁸

The existence of diverse religious communities is one of the main characteristics that make the Lebanese society unique. One might say that they caused its division; others might say that, on the contrary, they constitute its cultural wealth. The fact is that these communities intervene in all the aspects of the Lebanese society, even sport. This section is an analysis of the effects and level of involvement of the different religions in the different aspects of the Lebanese life. The objective is to expand the study to encompass the relevance of this diversity as a whole, and consequently on the Lebanese sports. As was stated previously, there are 18 distinct religious communities in a country of a geographic area of 10452 Km². These religions can be mainly divided into 3 groups:

- Moslems, who represent about 49.5% of the Lebanese population with the Shiites representing 26.2% and the Sunnite 23.3%.

- The Christian community that includes the Maronites, the Catholics, the Orthodox and the others. All together, they represent 44.6% of the Lebanese population with the Maronites constituting 20.4% of the population, the Catholic 9%, the Orthodox 9% and the others 6.2%.

- The Druzes and the others represent about 6% (Druzes 5.8%, Hebrew, Ismaeilan and Allaouites) of the population.

Muslim Shiites, Sunnite, Christian Maronites and Druze are the main communities that have had a direct impact on the Lebanese political and social history. However the role of the other 14 communities should not be neglected as their presence and

²⁸ See United Nations official website. All the material for discussion on religious communities is taken from the United Nations 2004 statistics.

doctrinal differences do add to the fragmented nature of the country. In this part of the chapter, we will first give an exposition on the 18 different religious communities, then we will look at their official divisiveness role in the Lebanese war. Finally we will look at their participation in the 1975-1990 war; a war that had shaped the formation of the Lebanese political scene of the end of the 20th century.

The Moslem communities

The Moslem communities are generally divided into two groups: the Sunni and the Shiites. The Sunni are generally defined as the Orthodox Moslem branch. The spiritual leader is the Mufti of the Republic, elected for life with a primary role of applying the religious laws and managing the community's assets. He is assisted by the Superior Judicial Council. The Mufti's residence and the services under his authority constitute the 'Dar al-Fatwa'. There are approximately 500,000 Sunni in Lebanon as well as an additional 300,000 Sunni Palestinians in refugee camps. They represent 23.3% of the Lebanese population.

The Shiite are historically divided into several sects, with the most notable being the Duodecimans. For religious laws, Shiites adhere to the teachings of the law school founded by the 5th Imam, Jaafar; from whose school of thought the Jaafarite's rite is derived. The community is managed by the Shiite Superior Islamic Council presided by a Doctor of Law, the Ulema. There are approximately 900,000 Shiite in Lebanon. It is the largest community in Lebanon as it represents 26.2% of the Lebanese population.

The Christian communities

They represent 44.6% of the total of the Lebanese population. Their number is about 1,531,000. There are two main branches: the communities that do not recognize the authority of the Catholic Pope, often referred to as the Orientals; and those that do recognize the authority of Rome, and who are referred to as the Occidental/Western churches. Most of the western churches came into being after their breaking with the Orientals.

Communities that do not recognize Rome

a. The Greek-Orthodox Church: its communities in Lebanon and Syria are under the authority of the Patriarch of Antioch and of all the Orient, who is in residence in Damascus. The Patriarch, along with the Greek-Orthodox Patriarchs of Jerusalem, Alexandria and those of Cyprus, Greece, Central Europe and Russia, recognize the spiritual but not the disciplinary primacy of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Istanbul. There are approximately 300,000 Greek-Orthodox in Lebanon (8.7% of the Lebanese population).

b. The Syrian-Orthodox (Jacobite) Church: the worldwide head of the church is the Patriarch of Antioch and of all the Orient, who resides in Damascus. There are approximately 20,000 Syrian-Orthodox in Lebanon (0.6% of the Lebanese population).

c. The Coptic-Orthodox Church: they are represented in Lebanon by the Syrian-Orthodox Church. There are 2000 adherents in Lebanon of which only 70

were given the Lebanese nationality in 1994. The church has been recognized by the state since 1996.

d. The Armenian-Gregorian Church: its members are also called Armenian-Orthodox in contrast to the Armenian-Catholics. They have nothing in common with the Greek-Orthodox Church since they are anti-Chalcedonic, more so because of their mistrust in the Byzantium creed than for any dogmatic disagreement. They are under the authority of the Catholicos of Sis (a city in Armenia) that was transferred to Antelias, Lebanon, at the turn of the last century after the Armenian genocide. The jurisdiction of the Catholicos extends to the Armenian-Gregorians of Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Egypt. There are approximately 150,000 adherents in Lebanon (4.4% of the Lebanese population).

e. The Nestorian Church: the church is made up of Assyro-Chaldeans of Iraqi origin and refugees of the 1933 Iraqi persecutions. The head of the church, the Catholicos, has resided in Baghdad since 1971. There are approximately 10,000 adherents in Lebanon (0.3% of the Lebanese population.)

f. The Protestant Churches: also known locally as the Evangelical Churches, the group is composed of 12 churches totaling approximately 33,000 Protestants in Lebanon (0.6% of the Lebanese population).

Communities that recognize the authority of the Pope

a. The Maronite Church: the church's name is derived from a 4th century hermit, Maroun, who lived in northern Syria. The Maronites began their migration to north Lebanon in the 7th century, and their history is somewhat obscured until their adherence to the Church of Rome in the 12th century, at the arrival of the

Crusaders. The Maronite Patriarch of Antioch and of all the Orient resides in Bkerké (Lebanon), and his authority extends over all the Maronites in the world. There are approximately 700,000 Maronites in Lebanon (20.4% of the Lebanese population).

b. The Greek-Catholic Church: it is also called the Melkite Church. It had its origins in the Greek-Orthodox Church from which it separated in 1724. It is headed by the Patriarch of Antioch for the Greek-Melkites, who resides in Damascus and who has authority over all the Greek-Catholics of the world. There are approximately 250,000 Greek-Catholics in Lebanon (7.3% of the Lebanese population).

c. The Armenian-Catholic Church: it is a branch that separated from the Armenian-Orthodox Church in 1740. Its head, the Armenian-Catholic Patriarch, resides in Beirut, and has authority over the Armenian-Catholics of the world. There are approximately 20,000 adherents in Lebanon (0.6% of the Lebanese population).

d. The Syrian-Catholic Church: it is a branch that has detached from the Syrian-Orthodox Church since the 15th century, and which was finally recognized by the Church of Rome in 1797. Its head is the Patriarch for the Syrian-Catholics. There are approximately 15,000 adherents in Lebanon (0.4% of the Lebanese population).

e. The Chaldean Church: it was created by a schism with the Nestorian Church in the 17th century; it was recognized by Rome in 1828. It is headed by the Patriarch of Babylon, who resides in Baghdad and represented in Lebanon by a bishop. There are approximately 6,000 Chaldeans in Lebanon (0.2% of the Lebanese population).

f. The Roman Catholic Church: it is also called the Latin Church. It is headed by

an archbishop (apostolic Vicar) appointed by Rome. His jurisdiction covers Lebanon and Syria, and he resides in Lebanon. There are 25,000 adherents of which only 3,000 are of Lebanese origin. There are also 10,000 Palestinians half of whom have been given the Lebanese nationality, as well as 12,000 foreigners (0.7% of the Lebanese population).

Other communities

The Druze community

The Druze doctrine is very hermetic and accessible only to the initiated. The community is formed of Juhhal, the non-initiated; and the Oqqal, the sages and the initiated. Only the Oqqal have access to the sacred writings and the religion's mysteries. The religious practices of the non-initiated are limited to the observance of the seven moral commandments. The spiritual head is the Sheikh Akl that holds the authority given him by the state to oversee personal status and succession rights, as well as the management of the community's assets. There are approximately 200,000 Druze in Lebanon (they represent 5.8% of the Lebanese population).

The Hebrew community

The nefarious repercussions at the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 brought many Arab Jews from other countries to Lebanon, and whose number had reached, by 1958, a total of 15,000. The community is managed by an elected community council of 17 members, which in turn chooses the 5 members of the executive office. A rabbinical tribunal resolves personal status matters. From 1958 the

continued Arab-Israeli conflict began a slow but constant rejection of the community until a major emigration to Israel, Europe, North and South-America started in 1972. There are approximately 1000 Jews left in Lebanon (2004).

The Ismaelian community

They are Shiites that adhere to the seventh Imam, Ismael Jaafar, after whom they are named and await his return. Their number is very small.

The Allaouites (Nosayris)

Their name is derived from Ibn Nosayr, a religious leader that separated from the Ismaelians in the 9th century to found a new doctrine.

Religious communities in the Lebanese Constitution²⁹

With this wide variety of religious Communities in such a small geographic area, and considering the civil war that has occurred in the country in the 19th century, it has been essential to form a government where the ‘necessary harmony’ between the opposing religious sects is personified. The search for a non-confessional government was the main objective of those who were behind the inception of this constitution. However, they quickly understood that such a goal was difficult to

²⁹ See The Lebanese Constitution, translated by Gabriel M. Bustros B.Sc. (Econ) London ‘Bureau of Lebanese and Arab documentation’ 1973.

attain; and the formation of a lay state would have to be undertaken gradually. This feature of the constitution was present in the 1926 text, and was also applied in the 1943 National Pact. It was further renewed in the Taef agreement in 1989, towards the end of the Lebanese Civil War. The articles of the Lebanese constitution that define the relation between the different religions, show how strong is the effect of these religious communities on the wording of these ordinances; and they reveal how complex a process it is to achieve a compromise among them³⁰.

Religious communities in the different Lebanese wars³¹

The abolition of confessionalism has never been an easy task. In fact, the right balance among the different communities has always been difficult to reach. Civil war has struck the state of Lebanon several times: in 1860, in 1958 during the Camille Chamoun presidency mandate, and finally, and most importantly, during the crucial 15 years of war between 1975 and 1990. In this part of the chapter, we will try to give a comprehensive account of the Lebanese war that started in 1975

³⁰ See Table 1 of the Appendix : Religious communities in the Lebanese Constitution.

³¹ The following account of the war is based on:

- Farid El Khazen, *Breakdown Of The State In Lebanon* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 1999).
- Jillian Becker, *The PLO: Rise And Fall Of The Palestine Liberation Organisation* (London: Wiedenfeld & Nicolson, 1984).
- Robert Fisk, *Pity The Nation* (London: Simon and Schuster, 1990).
- Jonathan Randal, *The Tragedy Of Lebanon* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1983).
- Said Aburish, *Arafat: From Defender To Dictator* (New York: St.Martin's Press, 1988).
- Rex Brynen, *Sanctuary And Survival: The PLO In Lebanon* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990).
- Thomas Friedman, *Beirut To Jerusalem* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1989).
- John Laffin, *The War Of Desperation 1982-85* (London: Osprey, 1985).
- Bob Woodward, *The Secret Wars Of The CIA* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987).
- F.I.Qubain, *Crisis In Lebanon* (Washington D.C: The Middle East Institute, 1961).

and was to last a decade and a half until 1990. To really understand the different aspects of the Lebanese war, we need to analyse the reason behind these clashes and what caused them. The Lebanese war is very complex and has many dimensions. To consider it, as some have, a 'civil war' is misleading, as many non-Lebanese nationals were very heavily involved; armies of neighbouring countries took part in much of the fighting. Moreover, the many references to opposition between the Christian and Muslims in the following text may cause those unfamiliar with the events to think that the war was a religious one. However, the opposing sides were not fighting each other simply because of their religion but as a result of a major difference of political opinion, on matters such as: Who should run the country and how the country should be run?

After the National Front coalition of Kamal Jumblatt³² and Saeb Salam³³ suffered major setbacks in the Parliamentary Elections of 1958, and after expressing their frustration of what they felt was more than 40 years of Maronite power 'abuse', the coalition and its Druze and Sunni supporters decided to take to the streets, and turned to violence the open rebellion against the government. With the aid of some Arab powers, these left wing forces, which were inspired and encouraged by the February 1958 unification of Egypt and Syria, fought to make Lebanon a member of the new United Arab Republic. The Lebanese Government lodged a complaint with the UN Security Council in June 1958. Press reports and government documents alike confirm a massive covert Syrian intervention that included supplying arms to the opposition, training paramilitary forces and using Syrian

³² Druze political leader.

³³ Sunni political leader.

soldiers to carry out terrorist attacks.³⁴ General Fouad Shihab³⁵, Commander of the Lebanese Army, believing that units of the small Lebanese army would declare mutiny and split up if ordered into action, disobeyed President Kamil Chamoun's³⁶ orders to send in the army against leftist rebels. Hence, the aid of the United States Army was sought. The Marines' role was to support the legal Lebanese Government against any foreign invasion, specifically against Syria. 5000 United States Marines were landed on the beaches near Beirut. The war took a toll of some 2000 to 4000 lives. Although the crisis passed quickly, it was a prelude of things that were soon to come.

After the 1967 war between Israel and the Arab countries, fractions of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) set about attacking Israel from South Lebanon and the Israelis retaliated. In December 1968, an Israeli commando unit landed at Beirut International Airport, and destroyed thirteen Middle East Airlines aircrafts³⁷. The Israeli strike was in retaliation for a series of Palestinian hijackings carried out by the Palestinians based in South Lebanon. The Lebanese army did not interfere, and the government was charged with collusion with Israel. Kamal Jumblatt, the Druze leader, led the anti-government chorus and demanded that Lebanon supports the guerrillas. A few months later, on 15 April 1969, fighting broke out again between the Lebanese Army and infiltrating guerrillas in the south. Clashes became recurrent as the number of guerrillas operating in Lebanon

³⁴ See F.I.Qubain, *Crisis In Lebanon* (Washington D.C: The Middle East Institute, 1961).

³⁵ Traditionnally, the Commander of the Lebanese Army is always a Maronite. Fouad Shihab was the commander of the Lebanese Army back then before becoming the President of the Lebanese Republic between 1958 and 1964.

³⁶ Camille Chamoun was the President of the Lebanese Republic between 1952 and 1958.

³⁷ See Rex Brynen, *Sanctuary And Survival: The PLO In Lebanon* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990) chapter 3.

increased. On 23 April in Sidon, armed demonstrators stormed into the municipality building in the city, and clashed with the Internal Security Forces. Confrontations followed in Beirut, Tripoli and the Bekaa. On 24 April, the Sunni prime minister, Rashid Karame, resigned in a show of support of the Palestinians. Clashes continued for the next seven months until a formula of ‘coexistence’ between the Lebanese State and the Palestinian revolution was found. On 20 October 1969, large numbers of Palestinian guerrillas began gathering on the western slopes of Mount Hermon, in the Arqub region of Lebanon, which resulted, a few days later, on the 29th, in a clash between Palestinians and the Lebanese Army. Following the clashes, a meeting was held on 16 November 1969 to discuss the matter. The meeting included the Lebanese Army Commander Emile Boustany and representatives of Palestinian organisations³⁸. Palestinian officials stated that their intention was to attack targets in Israel. To achieve this, they needed to pass through the Lebanese territory. To that Boustany replied that Lebanon would not allow such infiltrations. He then stated the Lebanese position on such military activities and stressed the following: (i) Lebanon signed an armistice agreement with Israel in 1949; it was still in effect and Lebanon could not violate it.....(iii) Attacks carried out by the Fedayin (guerrillas) from Lebanon would lead to violent Israeli retaliations against civilians in Lebanese villages.

However, the army was not able to control the flow of the Palestinian guerrillas infiltrating Lebanon from Syria, a state that angered the Christians who saw the Palestinian armed presence as a threat to Lebanon. Lebanon was still in a paralysed

³⁸ See Rex Brynen, *Sanctuary And Survival: The PLO In Lebanon* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990) chapter 3.

state as the president found it impossible to form a new government for the Sunni leadership refused to form a government unless Lebanon started a policy of coordination with the PLO. That formula was the Cairo Agreement. The situation forced Army Commander General Emile Boustany to sign an agreement in Cairo, in November 1969, with the Palestinian representatives. The Cairo Agreement granted the Palestinians the right to keep weapons in their camps and to attack Israel across Lebanon's border; and for their part, the Palestinians had to respect the Lebanese laws and Lebanon's sovereignty. For most Christian leaders, the Cairo Agreement was the 'lesser of two evils'. While acknowledging that military operations would eventually lead to Israeli raids, most of them explained that it would still be easier to cope with such raids than with a civil war between the Lebanese. Those who stood to benefit most from the outcome of the events that marked the stormy year of 1969 were Kamal Jumblatt, Leftist parties and, in a different way, the Sunni political establishment. In short, the Cairo Agreement met the demands voiced by the Sunni political and religious leadership. On the eve of the Cairo talks, Sunni Mufti Hassan Khalid held two meetings that were attended by Lebanon's leading political and religious figures, after which a statement calling for the freedom of guerrilla action was issued. An attempt to convene a meeting by the Shiite cleric Musa al-Sadr in support of the guerrillas was not successful, as the meeting was boycotted by leading Shiite figures. Nearly three weeks after the signing of the agreement clashes between the guerrillas and the Lebanese Army were renewed, this time in the Nabatiyeh camp in the south. The Cairo Agreement was violated from the start and it became irrelevant.³⁹

³⁹ See Rex Brynen, *Sanctuary And Survival: The PLO In Lebanon* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990) chapter 3.

Beginning of 1970, Palestinian-Israeli raids in the south intensified, as did the clashes between the Lebanese Army and the guerrillas. The PLO made a bid to topple Jordan's King Hussein, but the attempt was crushed and the PLO were evicted from the country after fierce fighting, an event known in the Palestinian lexicon as 'Black September'. As a result, the PLO leadership and guerrillas moved their main base of operations from Jordan to Lebanon, where the Cairo Agreement endorsed their presence. The influx of several hundred thousand Palestinians, including many tens of thousands of guerrillas, upset Lebanon's delicate confessional balance, and polarized the nation into two groups: those who supported and those who opposed the PLO presence. Public order deteriorated with daily acts of violence between Christians and Palestinians. Meanwhile, the Israeli Air Force launched raids against the Palestinian refugee camps in retaliation of PLO's terrorist attacks in Western Europe. On 10 April 1973, Israeli commandos infiltrated Beirut in a daring raid and attacked Palestinian command centres in the heart of the capital, Beirut. The absence of the Lebanese Army during the Israeli attack angered Lebanese Muslims. Prime Minister Saib Salam claimed that the Army Commander General Alexander Ghanim -a Maronite- had disobeyed orders by not resisting the Israeli raid. He threatened to resign unless General Ghanim was stripped of his rank. Because General Ghanim was allowed to remain as Army Commander, Salam did resign. Friction between the guerrillas and the Internal Security Forces increased rapidly, and a state of emergency was declared throughout the country. As the fighting intensified, the PLO appealed to external allies for support. Algeria, Libya, and Syria promptly condemned the Lebanese Government's actions. All three, together with Kuwait, Egypt, Morocco, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, and the Arab League offered to act as mediators. Egypt and Syria - now planning what would become the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War-were particularly anxious to contain the conflict, and consequently, exerted considerable

pressure to that end. The result was the closure of the Syrian-Lebanese border on 8 May, and the movement of Fateh and Sa'iqa forces from Syria to a few kilometres inside Lebanon. Fearing a Syrian invasion, the Lebanese looked for a way to end the fighting. On 17 May, the two-fighting parties announced that they had reached agreement, the 'Melkart Protocol', which, on one hand obligated the PLO to respect the 'independence, stability, and sovereignty' of Lebanon, but on the other hand gave the PLO the right to maintain its own militia forces in certain areas of Lebanon. The Lebanese Muslims believed that under the Melkart Agreement, the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon had been accorded a greater degree of self-determination than some Lebanese citizens. Inspired by this, the Muslim organized themselves politically and militarily, and encouraged by the Palestinians, tried to wrest out similar concessions from the central government. In 1974, the Druze leader Kamal Jumblatt established the Lebanese National Movement, an umbrella group encompassing the antigovernment forces. A military build-up was underway. Following the 1969 events, the Kataeb Party members were involved in occasional military training⁴⁰. The turning point, however, occurred after the 1973 confrontations between the Lebanese army and PLO forces, when Christian-based parties began to acquire heavy weapons and were engaged in organised training. It is worth noting that the most organised and disciplined Christian-based party was the Kataeb.

After several clashes opposing pro-PLO and pro-government parties early in 1975, on 13 April, sources stated that unidentified Palestinian gunmen opened fire at a congregation outside a Maronite Church in Ayn ar Rummeneh, a Christian Suburb

⁴⁰ See Farid El Khazen, *Breakdown Of The State In Lebanon* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 1999) p.176.

of Beirut. Later in the day, members of the Christian Phalangist Party ambushed a bus filled with Palestinians that had overrun a checkpoint, claiming 26 dead. At 10 pm, mortar shells slammed into Ayn ar Rummeneh. The next day saw raids against the Lebanese Army by the Palestinian groups; and fighting between the Phalangists and the Palestinians broke out⁴¹. While death and torture were suffered in the streets, the political battle between Pierre Gemayel⁴² and Kamal Jumblatt went on and led to the fall of the government. On 23 May, President Suleiman Franjeh took the unorthodox and unprecedented step of appointing a military cabinet. President Franjeh thought that a strong inter-confessional military government with unquestionable authority over the army could avert spreading the conflict. However, Lebanon's first and last military government was short lived, resigning two days after its inception. The resignation of the military government demonstrated the power vacuum in Lebanese politics, and served as the catalyst to the ongoing conflict. From June to September, clashes between Christians and pro-Palestinians were taking place all over the country. Deeply divided, the government ruled only on paper. As a concession to Karame, President Franjeh and Christian leaders restructured the army command. President Franjeh and other Maronite leaders hoped that Sunni leaders were willing to support a forceful army intervention. But this was not to happen. Though some Sunni leaders were willing to support a limited army intervention in Beirut, Jumblatt and the PLO-supported Left were categorically opposed to any kind of action. As for the Shiite leaders, they were in favour of army intervention. Faced by a strong Sunni—leftist opposition even to a limited army intervention, Pierre Gemayel issued an ultimatum on 16 September. The next day the Phalangists launched an offensive attack on Central Beirut. The fights were very violent; deaths, from the fighting,

⁴¹ See Robert Fisk, *Pity The Nation* (London: Simon and Schuster, 1990), pp.48-92.

⁴² A Maronite leader, founder of the Kataeb Party.

averaged about fifty a day. The intensity of the fights grew more and more and led to the initiation of the division of the city, which was soon to become complete, and the discrimination based on the religion of a person as shown on his identity card.

Seeing that the situation was getting out of hand, Kamal Jumblatt joined the Liberation National Movement and traditional Muslim leaders in initiating an appeal to Syria to assist in scheduling a meeting in the region of Aramun⁴³. The members of the Aramun summit urged Syrian Foreign Minister Khaddam to ask the Syrian President Hafiz Al-Assad to contact Lebanese President Franjeh and try to convince him to stop the fighting. President Assad called Franjeh on 18 January, and arranged a cease-fire for that night, but the agreement did not hold and fighting escalated instead. The Syrians decided that, than 'nothing remained but direct intervention'. The 3500 men that entered Lebanon from Syria on 19 January were primarily affiliated with one of the PLA (Palestinian Liberation Army) brigade. According to former President and at the time Minister of Interior Camille Chamoun, the indirect Syrian intervention quickly shifted the Lebanese military balance in favour of the anti-establishment leftist PLO coalition. On 21 January 1976, Lieutenant Ahmad El Khatib mutinied against the army, and joined the PLA. The movement was known as the Arab Army of Lebanon. Two days later, the army underwent another split. This time it was led by a Maronite, Colonel Antoine Barakat. The Lebanese Army was ripped into sectarian pieces. Army officers and troops entered into combat alongside the warring factions, while others remained under the nominal command of Army Commander Hanna Said; the latter commanded little authority, even before the break-up of the army. In the weeks of March and April 1976, the Palestinian-Muslim-leftist alliance forced the Lebanese

⁴³ See Jonathan Randal, *The Tragedy Of Lebanon* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1983).

Forces to retreat farther into east Beirut; at that time, the Christians militias began combining their military strength and became known as the Lebanese Forces. The left wing Muslim-Palestinian's advance was stopped, but not before dividing Beirut into two sectors: the Christian-east Beirut and the Muslim-west Beirut. This abandoned area was named 'the Green line; a name that was inspired by the fact that green grass covered this uninhibited area. A line that divided cut the city, as stated before, into two till the end of the Lebanese Civil War in 1990.

Efforts for a negotiated settlement had been underway. The idea for a negotiated political settlement to end conflict through Syrian mediation had been on the prime target of the Syrian leadership since November 1975. The negotiation between Syria and Lebanese President resulted in a draft of an agreement, which was the basis of the Constitutional document. It was a convenient balancing act. It stipulated a more balanced confessional representation in governmental offices, and provided a formula to contain the internal dimension of the existing conflict. It addressed grievances, though without undermining the confessional foundations of a political system. Here are some of the most important stipulations: (i) seats in parliament would be distributed on a fifty-fifty basis between Muslims and Christians, and proportionately within each sect; (ii) the Prime Minister would be elected by a 51 per cent majority of the Chamber; then, the Prime Minister should hold parliamentary consultations, and the list of ministers would be set in agreement with the President of the Republic; (iii) all decrees and draft laws should be signed by the President and the Prime Minister; this did not apply to the decrees appointing the Prime Minister, accepting his resignation, or dismissing his government; the Prime Minister should enjoy all the powers customarily exercised by him; (iv) the distribution of posts on a confessional basis be abolished, although

the principle of confessional equality should be maintained at the level of senior posts. This official document re-affirmed the distribution of the three presidential posts, which allocated the Presidency of the Republic to a Maronite, the Presidency of the Chamber of Deputies to a Shiite and the Premiership to a Sunni. Kamal Jumblatt (the Druze leader) and the PLO heavily opposed this document for they considered a re-enactment of the 1958 formula. Compromise was not appealing to Jumblatt and the PLO, at a time when the military balance was in their favour. Therefore they looked for way to intensify the fighting⁴⁴.

In March 1976, the leftist forces and the Palestinians launched an offensive attack across Mount Sannine in an attempt to invade the Christian heartland. This attack, coinciding with the assault on the hotel district in Down Town Beirut, began on 17 March and led to the capture of several villages in the Upper Metn region. These military operations, particularly the opening of a new front in the mountains, were alarming developments not only for the Christian forces but also for Syria who started to fear that a Christian defeat and so a Palestinian controlled Lebanon would lead to an Israeli invasion. As fighting broadened, attempts were made, once again, to reach a political settlement. Views on the course of the war and its objectives between Arafat⁴⁵ and Jumblatt began to diverge. While Jumblatt pressed for a military solution, Arafat was more cautious⁴⁶.

⁴⁴ See Thomas Friedman, *Beirut To Jerusalem* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1989) pp.21-126

⁴⁵ Arafat was the main leader of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation.

⁴⁶ See Said Aburish, *Arafat: From Defender To Dictator* (New York: St.Martin's Press, 1988) p.321.

The Syrian President Hafiz el Assad's attempts to persuade Jumblatt to accept a political settlement failed. Jumblatt was determined to score a military victory and alter the political system. On no issue of substance were the two men in agreement. For Assad, Jumblatt was not interested in political reforms but was rather settling a 140-year old sectarian vendetta (i.e. 1860 War between Druze and Maronites). On 9 April 1976, Syrian regulars crossed the border into Lebanon. In his first speech to the nation on his Lebanese policy, delivered on 12 April 1976, he declared that his move to Lebanon was to protect every 'oppressed person without regard for his religious affiliation'.⁴⁷ Responding to these developments, Kamal Jumblatt condemned the Syrian Army and demanded its immediate withdrawal. Lebanese spokesmen gave the Syrians a much more favourable reception. Lebanese President Franjieh praised the 'courageous stand' of Syria. Christian leaders, Camille Chamoun and Pierre Gemayel did not object the Syrian move. On 1 June 1976, 12000 Syrian Army troops entered Lebanon. The immediate precipitant for Syrian military intervention was an attack on two Maronite villages in Northern Lebanon by units of the Lebanese Arab Army, late in May 1976. Residents of the villages appealed to Syrian for assistance. In a subsequent justification of Syria's response, Prime Minister Karame suggested that Syria's intervention was 'motivated by nationalist and humanist sentiments'. Jumblatt accused them of 'planning' this attack under the pretext of intervention. Maronite leader Raymond Edde undermined the claim by Syrian Foreign Minister Khaddam that Syria had intervened based on the request of Lebanese authorities and a large segment of Lebanese public opinion. He accused the Syrians of trying to annex Lebanon. Other Maronite leaders like Dany Chamoun⁴⁸ and Bashir Gemayel⁴⁹ opposed the Syrian

⁴⁷ '*Al-Nahar*' Newspaper archives, 13 April 1976.

⁴⁸ Dany Chamoun is the son of late President Camille Chamoun. He was the leader of the Maronite party and Militia 'Ahrar' (Tigers). He will be assassinated in October 1990.

intervention on the grounds that it would prevent settlement from being reached between the warring factions. Bashir Gemayel was so concerned that he met with Jumblatt to discuss the issue. A full-fledged debate was soon under way in Lebanon about the propriety of the Syrian intervention. At a summit conference on 5 June, the Lebanese Front endorsed the Syrian Intervention, citing statements by Foreign Minister Khaddam reiterating Syrian commitment to the independence and territorial integrity of Lebanon. Lebanese President Franjieh justified the intervention as a necessary means for implementing the Constitutional Document, with first priority to the Cairo Agreement. Most leftist forces capitulated without firing a shot, overwhelmed by the Syrian show of force. In the following months, the Syrian presence grew to 27,000 troops. By November, the Syrians had occupied most of the Muslim-held areas of Lebanon, including West Beirut and Tripoli. However, Syrian intervention could not stop what has been the most violent battle in Lebanon, the one of Tal-el-Zaatar, between the opposing Lebanese Christian forces and pro-PLO left wings, where in a period of 52 days (from the end of June till August 12), about 2000 people died in the fighting, and 4000 were wounded⁵⁰.

In October 1976 a League of Arab States (Arab League) summit conference was convened in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to resolve the Lebanese crisis. The conference did not address the underlying political and demographic problems; it only addressed the security situation. The resulting multilateral agreement mandated a cease-fire and, at the Lebanese Government's behest, authorized the creation of the Arab Deterrent Force (ADF) whose role was to impose and supervise the cease-

⁴⁹ Bashir Gemayel is the son of Pierre Gemayel. Bashir Gemayel was elected President of the Republic on 23 August, 1982, before being assassinated on 14 September 1982.

⁵⁰ See Rex Brynen, *Sanctuary And Survival: The PLO In Lebanon* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990) ch.4.

fire. The ADF, funded by the Arab League, was to be a pan-Arab peacekeeping force under the supreme command of the Lebanese President. Moreover, the agreement legitimized any future Syrian occupation in Lebanon. The most strenuous opposition to the ADF was voiced by Maronite leaders who objected to the presence of Syrian troops in Maronite territories. However, even though some of the Christians militias were preparing for an eventual fight against the ADF, on 14 November, when Syrian troops moved into their new positions as an Arab Deterrent Force, no resistance was mounted. After the loss of over 65000 lives and the breakdown of 55 previous cease-fire agreements, the Lebanese were in no position to resume hostilities. In the summer of 1977, Syria, the PLO, and the Lebanese Government signed the Shtawrah Accord, which detailed the planned disposition of the ADF in Lebanon, and called for a reconstituted Lebanese Army to take over the PLO positions in southern Lebanon⁵¹. Meanwhile, Israel grew deeply concerned about the Syrian military presence in Lebanon, particularly as the Syrian Army pursued retreating Palestinians and Muslim leftists into southern Lebanon. Israel believed that the Syrian forces, massed in southern Lebanon, might attack Israel across the unfortified Lebanese border. Therefore, Israel enunciated its 'Red Line' policy, threatening to attack Syria if it crossed a line identified geographically with the Litani River. Because it was skeptical about the willingness and capability of the Lebanese Army to implement the Shtawrah Accord in replacing the PLO in southern Lebanon and securing the border area, the Israeli started, in 1977, to equip and fund a renegade Christian remnant of the Lebanese Army led by Major Saad Haddad⁵².

⁵¹See Rex Brynen, *Sanctuary And Survival: The PLO In Lebanon* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990) ch.5.

⁵² See Robert Fisk, *Pity The Nation* (London: Simon and Schuster, 1990) pp.92-134.

On 19 November 1977, President Sadat of Egypt paid a visit to Israel; a visit which caused shock in the Arab world and later resulted in Sadat's assassination. This marked a turning point in the Lebanese-Syrian relations as Syria suddenly found itself isolated and facing Israel alone. Syria reversed its position and started to rearm and enforce the PLO and the leftist factions. The Lebanese Forces, the Christian Militia, now looked upon the Syrians as an army of occupation and needed to act. They began to confront the Syrians. Gemayel, recognizing that only Israel was powerful enough to expel the Syrians, renewed contact with Israel⁵³. Arms shipments were stepped up, hundreds of Phalangist and Tiger militiamen were trained in Israel, and Israeli intelligence and security advisers were dispatched to East Beirut. February 1978 was marked by a series of bloody incidents between the Syrians and the Lebanese forces. Fighting broke out again on 9 April 1978 between the Lebanese Front and the Palestinians. This latest round began after the Syrians failed to restrain the Palestinians who were firing on the Lebanese Christians. As fighting intensified, the Syrians went finally into action, but against the Christians in east Beirut. Bashir Gemayel decided to take on the Syrians, possibly emboldened by what he thought was Israel's willingness to intervene militarily in Lebanon. He launched a series of direct attacks against the Syrian army. Tension was building between members of the Lebanese Front, in May 1978, due to what many felt was Suleiman Franjieh's pro Syrian stance, and his intention to break away from the front. As a result, in June 1978, fights erupted between the Phalangists and the Marada - Tony Franjieh's (Suleiman Franjieh's son) militia. In this first inter-Christian battle, Tony Franjieh, the son of the former president, along with his family, and 35 of his men were killed. On 28 June 1978, after clashes

⁵³ See Robert Fisk, *Pity The Nation* (London: Simon and Schuster, 1990) pp.92-134.

between the Syrians and the Lebanese Christians in the Bekaa Valley, the Lebanese Front claimed that this act was part of a Syrian goal to weaken the Christian community by forcing the Christians out of the Bekaa. Fighting broke out and Syria rushed forces to Beirut, and on 1 July 1978, unleashed an artillery attack across Christian-east Beirut, particularly the Phalangist stronghold of Ashrafieh, in preparation for taking over the area. After a 100-days battle, and several attempts of negotiations between Maronite leader Pierre Gemayel, the Lebanese President Elias Sarkis⁵⁴ and the Syrian President Hafez El Assad, the Syrian Army halted its offensive but maintained its siege. As the tension remained, both sides were re-supplying their forces. It has been said that in pitting his meagre force against the Syrian Army, Bashir Gemayel was taking a calculated gamble that Israel would come to his rescue⁵⁵. The Israelis threatened to go to war to preserve the Maronite community. On 9 October 1978, the Syrian forces began to pull back. In the Syrian capital, Presidents Sarkis and Assad agreed on a tentative settlement to stabilize the cease-fire. On 7 July 1980, the Phalangists launched a surprise attack against Chamoun's National Liberal Party Militia, the Tigers (another Christian Militia). The latter was defeated, and Bashir Gemayel emerged as the dominant Maronite leader. By the end of October 1980, the main bulk of the Tiger militia was totally absorbed into the Lebanese forces. Bashir Gemayel then announced that all of the individual militias of the various parties of the Lebanese Front would disband and their troops would combine as one fighting force under his command in the Lebanese Forces; President Gemayel intended, in his plot, to embroil Israel in a full-scale war against Syria. He obtained from Israel the commitment to fight Syria at his behest, although Israel admonished the Lebanese Forces not to attack the

⁵⁴ Elias Sarkis was the Lebanese President between 1975 and 1982.

⁵⁵ See Robert Fisk, *Pity The Nation* (London: Simon and Schuster, 1990) pp.92-134.

Syrians. As the tension in the Bekaa Valley subsided, on 10 July 1981, Israel commenced a five-day air strikes and naval bombardments against PLO strongholds in Southern Lebanon. The conflict escalated until 24 July, when a negotiation ended the artillery duel.

On 3 June 1982, terrorists of the Abu Nidal Organisation, a group that had split off from the PLO, attempted to assassinate Shlomo Argov, the Israeli ambassador to Britain. On 4 June, Israel aircrafts bombed Palestinian targets in West Beirut, and the PLO resumed artillery fire on Israeli settlements in the northern Galilee. The Israeli Cabinet convened and authorized an invasion, named Operation Peace for Galilee, but it set strict limits on the extent of the incursion: The IDF (Israeli Defence Forces) was to advance no farther than forty kilometres inside the Lebanese borders; the operation was to last only twenty-four hours; Syrian forces were not to be attacked; and Beirut was not to be approached. The IDF advanced rapidly in the first day of war, bypassing and enveloping pockets of PLO resistance. On 8 June, the IDF evicted the Syrian Army from Jezzine and proceeded towards the north. The IDF could not proceed further against the entrenched Syrian positions without close air support, but the Syrian air defense systems threatened the Israeli control of the skies. On 9 June, the Israeli Cabinet gave permission for an air raid against the Syrian antiaircraft missile batteries in the Bekaa Valley. The Syrians, caught by surprise, sustained severe losses. The devastation of the air defense system and the decimation of the Syrian Air Force provided the IDF with total air superiority in Lebanon, and left the Syrian infantry exposed to air attack. The IDF had broken the last line of Syrian defense, but owing to political pressures, on 11 June, Israel and Syria agreed to a truce under United States auspices, and the Israeli's advance stopped just a couple of kilometres short of the Beirut-Damascus

highway. The cease-fire signaled the start of a new stage in the war, as Israel focused on PLO forces trapped in Beirut. According to the original plan, the Lebanese Forces were to move into west Beirut under the covering fire of Israeli artillery, and reunite the divided capital. Bashir Gemayel concluded, however, that such overt collusion with the IDF would prejudice his chances to become president⁵⁶, and consequently, reneged on the promises he had made. Israel maintained the siege of Beirut for seventy days, unleashing a relentless barrage of air, naval, and artillery bombardment. Arafat⁵⁷ had threatened to turn Beirut into a ‘second Stalingrad’, and to fight the IDF to the last man. His negotiating stance grew tenuous, especially after the Lebanese leaders, who had previously expressed solidarity with the PLO, petitioned him to abandon Beirut to spare the civilian population further suffering. Arafat agreed to withdraw the PLO from Beirut. An advance unit of the Multinational Force (MNF), 350 French troops, arrived in Beirut on 21 August. The Palestinian evacuation by sea to Cyprus and by land to Damascus commenced on the same day⁵⁸. The Palestinian exodus ended on 1 September. On 23 August, the legislature elected Bashir Gemayel President of Lebanon. On 10 September, the United States Marines withdrew from Beirut, followed by the other members of the MNF. The Lebanese Army began deploy in west Beirut and the Israelis withdrew their troops from the front lines. By ushering in Gemayel as president, and evicting the PLO from Beirut, Israel had attained two of its key-war goals. Israel's remaining ambition was to sign a comprehensive peace treaty with Lebanon that would stipulate the withdrawal of the Syrian forces and the prevention of the PLO from re-infiltrating Lebanon after the IDF withdrawal. On 14 September 1982, President-elect Gemayel was assassinated in the Phalangist

⁵⁶ See Robert Fisk, *Pity The Nation* (London: Simon and Schuster, 1990) pp.199-243.

⁵⁷ See Said Aburish, *Arafat: From Defender To Dictator* (New York: St.Martin's Press, 1988) p.321.

⁵⁸ See Robert Fisk, *Pity The Nation* (London: Simon and Schuster, 1990) pp.319-359.

Party headquarters in east Beirut where he was delivering a speech to party members. According to many sources, the perpetrator was Habib Shartouny, a Syrian agent, member of the Syrian Socialist Nationalist Party⁵⁹. Bashir Gemayel's brother, Amin⁶⁰, who was opposed to the Israeli presence in Lebanon, was elected president with United States backing. Between 15 September and 18 September, reports said that between 700 and 800 Palestinian men, women and children were massacred by the Lebanese Forces under the 'supervision' of the IDF. At the behest of the Lebanese Government, the Multinational Force (MNF formed mainly by Americans, French and Italians.) was deployed again in Beirut, but with over twice the manpower of the first peacekeeping force. On 1 October, President Gemayel declared Beirut reunited, as the army demolished barricades along the Green Line that had been standing since 1975. In the first months of 1983, approximately 5,000 government troops were deployed throughout Greater Beirut. But the most important result was that the government began to build a strong national army.

Imam Musa Al-Sadr, an Iranian-born Shiite cleric who had founded the Higher Shiite Islamic Council in 1969, created the 'Amal' militia with the help of the PLO, but refused to engage Amal in the fighting during the first years of the war. The 1979 Iranian Revolution galvanized Lebanon's Shiite community and inspired in it a new militancy. Iran sought to spread Shiite revolution throughout the Middle East, and so, provided military support to Amal. The Israeli invasion served as a catalyst for a further upsurge within the Shiite militancy. In July 1982, Iran dispatched an expeditionary force of volunteer Pasdaran Revolutionary Guards to Lebanon, ostensibly to fight Israeli invaders. The approximately 650 Pasdaran

⁵⁹ 'Al-Nahar' Newspaper archives, 15 September 1982.

⁶⁰ Amin Gemayel was Lebanese Republic President between 1982 and 1988.

established their headquarters in the city of Baalbek in the Syrian-controlled Bekaa Valley, in 1982; but this number increased to some 2,000 over the next few years. The political fission that characterized Lebanese politics also afflicted the Shiite movement as groups split off from Amal. Hussein al Malawi, a former Amal lieutenant, entered into an alliance with the Iranian Revolutionary Guard stationed in Lebanon, and established the Islamic Amal; Hezbollah being of its factions.

The United States limited in its efforts to acting as negotiator in an Israeli-Lebanese agreement, and Israel announced its willingness to negotiate. The military and security articles of the 17 May Agreement between the Israeli and Lebanese Governments called for an abolition of the state of war between the two countries; and the setting of security arrangements to ensure the sanctity of Israel's northern border as an integral condition for Israeli withdrawal. The Israeli withdrawal was made contingent upon concurrent Syrian withdrawal; however, Syria vehemently opposed this agreement and responded by announcing, on 23 July 1983, the foundation of the National Salvation Front (NSF). This coalition comprised of many sects, including the Druzes led by Walid Jumblatt⁶¹ (Druze leader, son of Kamal Jumblatt); Shiites led by Nabih Berri⁶²; Sunni Muslims led by Rashid Karame⁶³; Christian elements led by Suleiman Franjeh and several smaller, Syrian-sponsored, left-wing political parties. Since these groups, together with Syria, controlled more Lebanese territories than the central government, the NSF constituted a challenge not only to President Gemayel, but also to the United States and Israel. To emphasize their opposition to the 17 May Agreement, the Syrian and

⁶¹ After the assassination of Kamal Jumblatt, his son, Walid, became the political leader of the Druze community.

⁶² Nabih Berri is the political leader of the Shiite party of 'Amal'.

⁶³ Rashid Karame has been appointed Prime Minister several times.

the Druze forces in the mountains overlooking Beirut, let loose a barrage of artillery fire on the Christian areas of Beirut, underscoring the weakness of Gemayel's government. Terrorist activity resumed; and between June and August 1983, at least twenty car bombs exploded throughout Lebanon, killing over seventy people⁶⁴. In August, militiamen began to bombard United States Marines positioned near Beirut International Airport with mortar and rocket fire, as the Lebanese Army fought the Druze and the Shiite forces in the southern suburbs of Beirut.

The Lebanese Forces took advantage of the Israeli advances and deployed troops in areas where they had not been present before. This territorial expansion was focused on where there were large Christian rural populations such as the Shouf. Sporadic fighting soon broke out between the Lebanese Forces and the Druze PSP who viewed the LF as intruders on their territory. East Beirut was also occasionally shelled. President Amin Gemayel made plans to deploy the Lebanese army in the Shouf as a buffer between the LF and the PSP, but Walid Jumblatt voiced his objection and accused the army of being agents of the Kataeb (Lebanese Force). On 3 September 1983, the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) began to evacuate the Shouf-Mountain region, and within twenty-four hours had completed its redeployment to the south of the Awwali River. The Lebanese Forces troops realised, at the last minute, that a large scale Druze assault was about to take place and began evacuating Christian civilians to Dier Al Qamar. The Lebanese Forces were completely caught by surprise and were vastly out numbered. They decided to put up a defence at Bhamdoun, a Christian town where the Beirut-Damascus highway

⁶⁴ See John Laffin, *The War Of Desperation 1982-85* (London: Osprey, 1985).

touches the edge of the Shouf Mountains. Concurrently, the Lebanese Army sought to guard the town of Suq al Gharb and Khaldeh to prevent Druze forces from invading Beirut. Palestinian guerrillas, Shiite militia, Communist Party and SSNP gunmen and Druze militia, supported by Syrian artillery, tanks and plain-clothes gunmen assaulted Bhamdoun. After several days of combat, Bhamdoun was captured by the morning of 7 September. The Phalangists' was expensive for the Christian community, which lost a large amount of territory. The cost in political currency was even higher. The fighting dealt a blow to President Amin Gemayel's credibility and authority in his dual role as Chief of State and leader of the Christian community⁶⁵. In Suq al Gharb, it was the Lebanese Army commanded by an officer called Michel Aoun⁶⁶, confronted the Druze militias. United States Navy warships shelled the Druze positions and helped the Lebanese Army secure the town until a cease-fire was declared on 25 September. The 25 September cease-fire briefly froze the situation. The Lebanese regime and opposition personalities agreed to meet in Geneva for a national reconciliation conference, under Saudi and Syrian auspices, to discuss political reform and the 17 May pact. On 29 September 1983, the United States Congress, by a solid majority, sanctioned the United States military presence for an eighteen-month period.

On 23 October the Shiite Islamic radicals shook the already-reduced resolve of the Americans and their MNF partners by simultaneous suicide bombings of the U.S. and French compounds in west Beirut⁶⁷. The attacks against the Marine and the

⁶⁵ See John Laffin, *The War Of Desperation 1982-85* (London: Osprey, 1985).

⁶⁶ Michel Aoun became Prime Minister by interim between 1988 and 1990. After his loss against the Syrians, he was exiled to France, where he found the Free Patriotic Movement, one of the most popular Lebanese Christian political party in the Post-War period.

⁶⁷ 'Al-Nahar' Newspaper archives, 24 October 1983.

French compounds seemed timed to coincide with the start of Lebanon's long-awaited national reconciliation conference, but the conference went ahead. At the Geneva conference, in early November, the Saudi were able to enforce on the Maronite, Muslim, and Druze participants to reach a limited consensus; and it was agreed to delegated President Gemayel to approach the Americans in an attempt to impose on them the need to revise the 17 May pact, and to make it a purely military arrangement. Although the MNF remained in Lebanon after the October 1983 suicide truck bombings, the situation of the United States and French contingents was precarious. In early February 1984, Shiite Amal militiamen clashed with the Lebanese Army in the southern suburbs of Beirut, and after four days of heavy fighting, gained control over Beirut International Airport, evicted the army from west Beirut, and re-established the Green Line partitioning the capital. The day after the Lebanese Army was forced out of west Beirut, and as the security environment in Lebanon deteriorated, Britain, France, Italy, and the United States decided to withdraw their MNF contingents. The most significant feature of February 1984 was that for the first time, the Shiite organizations, with Amal in the lead and the Iranian-backed Islamists of Hezbollah not far behind, imposed themselves on Lebanese politics. West Beirut came under local militia control, principally Nabil Berry's Amal and Jumblatt's PSP. The withdrawal of the MNF left Syria as the dominant force in Lebanon, and Syria acted rapidly to consolidate its grip on the Lebanese affairs. It pressured President Gemayel to abrogate the 17 May Agreement, which he did so on 5 March 1984. On 6 March President Amin Gemayel paid his first official visit to Damascus. It was agreed, on 12 March 1984, that the Lebanese traditional political leaders, Christians and Muslims, as well as Druze and Shiite militia commanders meet in Lausanne, Switzerland. All except the Lebanese Forces were to be represented. After 9 days of talks, the conference did not meet its expectations. The Lebanese Forces were not happy with the new

Gemayel-Syria relationship. Fostered and stimulated by popular support, and frustrated to be blatantly ignored, the Lebanese forces announced that they were unconcerned with the discussions and results of the conference, for it only aimed at consolidating Syrian hegemony over Lebanon. They emphasized their readiness to go to war against the Syrian forces and their allies, whatever the price. Military exchanges between the LF, hostile to Gemayel new relations with Syria, and Syria's west Beirut allies continued until the end of April, when Syrian maneuvers produced a 'National Unity' Government under the veteran Tripoli politician Rashid Karame. In this way, Syria's allies were brought into the official apparatus; and eight months of hostilities around Beirut finally gave way to an uneasy truce between the Christian and non-Christian sectors⁶⁸.

The friction between the Lebanese Forces and President Amin Gemayel was mounting, and at the end led President Gemayel to press the Lebanese Forces to disarm and to hand over the Port of Beirut. Samir Geagea⁶⁹, a Lebanese Force leader continued refusing the government's repeated requests, and on 11 March 1985, he was removed from his post. The next day, on 12 March, the Lebanese Forces reacted. The coup was successful, bloodless, without resistance and with neither human nor material losses. The Lebanese Forces laid their hands on and secured the Kataeb Party's properties, real estate, businesses and media. From this point on, the Phalangist Party became solely a political party, and lost its influence and control on the Lebanese Forces. President Amin Gemayel's authority was greatly undermined. Samir Geagea became the new head of the Lebanese Forces.

⁶⁸ See John Laffin, *The War Of Desperation 1982-85* (London: Osprey, 1985).

⁶⁹ Samir Geagea is an important Christian political leader. Four years after the end of the war, he was put in jail. However, even in jail, he was still considered the 'spiritual' leader of the Christian-based Lebanese Forces political party.

During this period, relative calm was restored to the Christian-east Beirut, but fighting broke out again in west Beirut. Under Syria's aegis, Amal attempted to consolidate its control over west Beirut. Amal struck first in 15 April with a joint PSP assault that routed the Sunni Murabitun militia of the Independent Nasserite Movement in a matter of days.

Some Israeli policymakers considered South Lebanon's Shiite natural allies, especially because both Israel and the Shiites wanted to prevent the PLO from returning to the area⁷⁰. These hopes, however, were never realized. The Shiites, in fact, turned out to be vehemently resisting to the Israeli presence in southern Lebanon. Concerned about the growing number of casualties inflicted on the IDF by Shiite militants, the IDF hastened its withdrawal from southern Lebanon, adhering to an accelerated deadline voted by the Israeli cabinet. It pulled its troops back to a 9-mile deep security zone along the Lebanese-Israeli border. Celebrations of Israeli pullout were short lived. In March and April of 1985, a new round of Christian-Muslim fighting pitting a Palestinian-Druze-Shiite coalition against the Lebanese Forces engulfed Sidon. The army was dispatched, but appeared powerless to stop the combat. On 24 April, after 40 days of combats, the Lebanese Forces fighters started to withdraw from Sidon. The Israelis continued their withdrawal in the west of the Bekaa region. This defeat was a very serious blow to the Lebanese Forces and particularly to Geagea who had only recently taken over command. With Geagea's disgrace, Elie Hobeika⁷¹, was elected the new head of the LF on 9 May 1985. Almost as soon as Hobeika took over the LF, he visited

⁷⁰ See Robert Fisk, *Pity The Nation* (London: Simon and Schuster, 1990) pp.92-134.

⁷¹ Elie Hobeika was a Lebanese warlord who participated in several clashes during the war. He was assassinated in 2002.

Syria on 9 September. Many in the LF felt something had gone terribly wrong and began to look at Hobeika with suspicion.

In late 1985, Syria sponsored yet another agreement among Lebanon's factions that aimed at ending the ongoing war. On 28 December, the leaders of Lebanon's three main militias--Nabih Berry of Amal, Walid Jumblatt of the Druze Progressive Socialist Party, and Hobeika of the LF--signed the Tripartite Accord in Damascus. Although this agreement resembled many previous failed Syrian initiatives to restore order in Lebanon, it was more comprehensive. It provided for an immediate cease-fire and an official proclamation of the end of the state of war within one year. The militias would be disarmed and then disbanded, and sole responsibility for security would be relegated to the reconstituted and religiously integrated Lebanese Army, supported by Syrian forces. More broadly, the accord envisaged a 'strategic integration' of the two countries in the spheres of military affairs, national security, and foreign relations. This factor engendered considerable optimism in some quarters, but great trepidation in others where it was viewed as an attempt to reconstruct Greater Syria. Gemayel refused to endorse the agreement, however, solicited the support of the Lebanese Forces Chief of Staff Samir Geagea, who had been demoted only eight months earlier for his anti-Syrian, Christian supremacist stance. Fierce fighting raged within the Christian camp between partisans of Hobeika and Geagea. Hobeika was defeated and it was considered to be a major blow to Syrian prestige. Geagea, emboldened by his restored power, challenged Gemayel and the Phalange Party and announced the creation of the Free Lebanon Army, which was to be under his sole command. On 4 July 1986, Syrian troops entered west Beirut for the first time since being expelled during the 1982 Israeli invasion. Approximately 500 Syrian troops, working with the Lebanese

Army and police, cleared roadblocks, closed militia offices, and collected weapons. In mid-February 1987, however, a new round of fighting broke out in west Beirut, this time between Druze and Shiite militias, both of who were regarded as Syrian allies. Syria acted decisively to stop the chaos in west Beirut. It dispatched 7500 troops that closed down some seventy militia offices. By mid-1987 the Syrian Army appeared to have settled into Beirut for a protracted stay⁷².

As the end of President Gemayel's term of office approached, the different Lebanese factions could not agree on a successor, and compromise candidates were rejected by the Syrians. Consequently, when his term expired Gemayel appointed, in the first minutes of 23 September 1988, Army Commander General Michel Aoun as interim Prime Minister, until new elections could be held. Salim al-Hoss⁷³, with Syrian backing, objected to this and continued to act as de facto Prime Minister based in west Beirut saying that he was the Prime Minister. Lebanon was thus divided between an essentially Muslim pro-Syrian Government in west Beirut and an essentially Christian Government in east Beirut. Aoun felt that the power of both of these interfering forces, the militias and the Syrians had to be reduced. In February 1989, General Aoun ordered the Lebanese Army to close illegal ports run by the LF. On 14 February 1989, Aoun struck at the LF in the Metn and in east Beirut. After two days of fighting, the army gained the upper hand. The LF surrendered the Port of Beirut, which was thus removed from LF control for the first time since the early days of the Civil War; the LF also gave up its major taxes and acknowledged Aoun's military council's supremacy. On 24 February 1989, Aoun ordered the closure of 'illegal ports' to compel shipping to use the Port of

⁷² 'Al-Nahar' Newspaper archives, February to December 1987.

⁷³ Salim al-Hoss is a sunni political figure. He has several times been named Prime Minister.

Beirut. On 6 March, Aoun activated the army's 'Marine Operations Room' and started a blockade of west Beirut militia ports. The attempt by Aoun to close ports under Syrian control and mainly Muslim parts of the country resulted in the shelling of east Beirut by pro-Syrian militias and the Syrian Army. On 14 March 1989, Aoun declared a 'War of Liberation'. This led to a 7-month period of shelling of east Beirut by Muslim pro-Syrian militias and by Syrian forces, and the shelling of West Beirut and the Shouf by the Lebanese Army with some support from the Lebanese Force. In July 1989, in Casablanca, a high committee composed of Saudi King Fahd, Algerian President Bendjedid, and Moroccan King Hassan worked toward a solution in Lebanon. It issued in September a report containing a seven-point cease-fire memorandum, thus, bringing to an end to the War of Liberation, followed by a meeting of Lebanese parliamentarians in Taef, Saudi Arabia⁷⁴.

After a month of intense discussions, in October 1989, the deputies informally agreed on a charter of national reconciliation, also known as the Taef agreement. They returned to Lebanon in November, where they approved the Taef agreement on 4 November, and elected Rene Moawad, a Maronite Christian deputy from Zgharta in north Lebanon, President on 5 November. General Aoun, claiming powers as interim Prime Minister, issued a decree in early November dissolving the parliament, and did not accept the ratification of the Taef agreement or the election of President Moawad. His main objection was that the Agreement gave no timetable for any further Syrian withdrawal but had merely stipulated that 'such withdrawals would be negotiated at the appropriate time by the Governments of Lebanon and Syria'. Fearing a Syrian assault, hundreds of thousands of Lebanese

⁷⁴ See '*Al-Nahar*' Newspaper archives, July 1989

flocked to the Presidential Palace in late December 1989 to form a 'human shield' around the compound, after Syrian military forces surrounding the free enclave, began massing for an imminent invasion.

President Moawad was assassinated on 22 November 1989, by a bomb that exploded as his motorcade was returning from Lebanese Independence Day ceremonies. The parliament met on 24 November in the Bekaa Valley and elected Elias Hrawi, a Maronite Christian deputy from Zahle in the Bekaa Valley, as the new President. President Hrawi named Salim al-Hoss as the new Prime Minister on 25 November. Despite widespread international recognition of Hrawi and his government, General Aoun refused to recognize Hrawi's legitimacy, and Hrawi officially replaced Aoun as army commander in early December. Geagea was becoming seduced by the Taef agreement. In January 1990, rumours surfaced in east Beirut about alleged Lebanese Forces contacts with American officials and Syrian officers regarding an LF ditching of Aoun. Whether these reflected reality or disinformation, they certainly raised tensions. On 30 January, Aoun announced a compulsory 'uniting of the rifle' in east Beirut, meaning absorption of the LF into his army brigades. For the LF this was a declaration of war. The war broke out between the army and the Lebanese Forces. The final blow came on 9 April 1990 when the Lebanese Forces announced their support for Taef, and their readiness to hand over the institutions under their control to the rival government in west Beirut. The fighting continued, over 900 people died and over 3,000 were wounded, during these battles called the 'War of Elimination' by Samir Geagea. In October 1990, the Syrian military supported by Lebanese troops loyal to Hrawi launched an attack against General Aoun. For many years a no fly zone over the whole of Lebanon had been enforced by the Israelis preventing the Syrians from using their air force,

on this day however, the Syrians were allowed to fly by the United States as reward for their joining the NATO coalition against Iraq in the Gulf crisis⁷⁵. In a matter of little time, Syrians bombardments forced General Aoun to surrender. Over the next few days, after the surrender of General Aoun, Syrian agents moved into east Beirut and many Aoun supporters were arrested. On 24 December 1990, Omar Karame was appointed Lebanon's Prime Minister. General Aoun remained in the French embassy until 27 August 1991 when a 'special pardon' was issued, allowing him to leave Lebanon safely and take up residence in exile in France. 1991 and 1992 saw considerable advancement in efforts to reassert state control over Lebanese territory. The militias were dissolved in May 1991 with the important exception of Hezbollah and units of Amal so that they can carry on the fight to oust the Israelis from Lebanon; and the armed forces moved against armed Palestinian elements in Sidon in July 1991.

The elections of 1992 were not prepared and carried out in a manner to ensure the broadest national consensus. The turnout of eligible voters in some Christian locales was extremely low, with many voters not participating in the elections because they objected to voting in the presence of non-Lebanese forces. According to the Taef agreement, the Syrian and Lebanese Governments were to agree in September 1992 to the redeployment of Syrian troops from greater Beirut. That date passed without an agreement.

⁷⁵ See '*Al-Nahar*' Newspaper archives, October to December 1990.

Fighting continued in the south between Hezbollah and the Israelis to various degrees of intensity. During the escalation in the fighting in July 1993, known as ‘Operation Accountability’ in Israel, and the ‘Seven Day War’ in Lebanon, some 120 Lebanese civilians were killed and close to 500 injured by a ferocious Israeli assault on population centres in southern Lebanon, an offensive which also temporarily displaced some 300,000 Lebanese villagers. To end the fighting in July 1993, the United States brokered an unwritten agreement between Israel and Hezbollah, the July 1993 ‘understandings’. The agreement supposedly prohibited attacks on civilians, but both sides understood the agreement to mean that if one side broke the rules, the other side could do so as well. As a result, between July 1993 and April 1996, both sides accrued civilian casualties whenever their side had attacked civilians first. In April 1996, the agreement that had ended the July 1993 fighting broke down under the weight of cumulative violations by both sides. Within forty-eight hours, Israel launched what it referred to as ‘Operation Grapes of Wrath’. Estimates of the number of displaced civilians’ range from 300,000 to 500,000 civilians. In the single most lethal event of the operation, on 18 April, 1996, at least seventeen Israeli high explosive artillery shells hit a UNIFIL compound near the village of Ana, in which over 800 Lebanese civilians had taken shelter. Some 102 civilians were killed. The Israeli offensive attacks in April 1996 ended with a cease-fire agreement, brokered by the U.S, that was an improvement over the July 1993 understandings. This time, the agreement was contained in a public written document that included a commitment by both Israel and ‘armed groups in Lebanon’ to ‘insuring that under no circumstances will civilians be the target of attack and that civilian populated areas and industrial and electrical installations will not be used as launching grounds for attacks.’ The agreement also established a group consisting of Lebanon, Israel, Syria, France and the United

States to monitor compliance with the agreement. Fights continued to happen until 24 May 2000 when the Israeli pullout was complete.

To date (2004), Hezbollah continues to attack Israel from time to time, considering that their withdrawal was not complete and that the Shebaa farms (situated in South Lebanon) is still in their possession. Israel sometimes retaliates with artillery and aircraft. The Lebanese Army has not been largely deployed in the liberated regions of South Lebanon with security being handled mainly by Amal and Hezbollah. Even if the Syrian military presence has considerably restrained, the political influence of Damascus is still important.

The religious communities in the different Lebanese political parties⁷⁶

The face of the Lebanese political scene was the result of decades of conflicts. After the dissolution of the militia by the Syrian Army in 1990, most of the different factions turned into political parties. Therefore, like the militias, the political parties are also shaped by the different religious communities and cultures.

Herein is the list and ‘religious description’ of all the different political parties present on the Lebanese scene as of the beginning of the 21st century: there is an extensive and complex assemblage of political movements in Lebanon

⁷⁶ See Lebanese Interior Ministry, 2000 legislative elections, list of the political parties [In Arabic].

- **Lebanese Forces:** this party is the ‘successor’ of the Maronite militia that has fought during the war.
- **Free Patriotic Movement:** led by the former general in exile, Michel Aoun, this party embodies the political ideals of the latter. Most of the people in this party are Christians.
- **Hezbollah:** means the ‘Party of God’. This is the political arm of the Shiite Military organisation that has fought Israel in the South of Lebanon.
- **Amal Party:** this party is also the ‘successor’ of the Shiite militia that has fought during the war.
- **Al Ahrar:** led by Dory Chamoun, son of late and former President Camille Chamoun, this party used to be one of the Christian militias (Tigers) during the war.
- **The Phalange party:** it was founded by late Maronite leader Pierre Gemayel; this party was the dominant force of the ‘Christian resistance’ in the beginning of the war.
- **The Socialists:** this party was founded by the late Druze leader Kamal Jumblatt. Although considered a left movement inspired by the Marxist ideal, and even if it had non- Druze members before the war, the party later on consisted of exclusively Druze members. Therefore, this party could hardly be separated by its Druze links.
- **The Jama’a Islamia Party:** this party is the unification of Sunni Islamic groups in Tripoli.
- **The Syrian Nationalist Socialist Party:** it was founded by a Christian Orthodox philosopher, Antoun Saade. This party believes that Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq were once parts of one nation: ‘Syria’. Because of the many inner disputes, it is difficult to know from which community the members of this party belong.

However, this party has a strong popularity within the Christian Orthodox community in the Koura region (North Lebanon).

- **The Nasserite Party:** the Egyptian President Jamal Abdel Nasser's ideas for a united Arabic nation found enthusiasm in Lebanon. The members of this party were former Sunni militants 'Murabitun'.

- **The Communist Party:** the Lebanese communist party members have said that they would consider Lebanon the last party on earth they would choose to conduct a political activity based on communism for so many reasons. The main one is that Lebanon is a country based on religion and religious groups and so during any election it is unlikely that any citizen might vote to any communist secular candidate to represent his religious group. However, the left Communist party allied with the Socialists, the 'Murabitun' and the Palestinians against the Christian right at the beginning of the war, they also waged fierce battles against the Israelis, but lately one wing inside the Communist party (George Hawi's wing, former long time leader of the Communists) allied with the 'Kernat Shehwan' gathering which consists of most Christian opposition groups (Lebanese Forces, Aounistes, Phalange, Ahrar....)

- **The Guardians of the cedar:** this party, mainly a Christian party, participated in the Lebanese war against the Palestinians first as independent militias, then as a political group inside the 'Lebanese Front' as its fighters joined the Lebanese Forces.

- **The Islamic Charitable projects association:** it began as a charity projects association and developed to a political movement. Its slogan is 'Moderate Islam'. It is considered to be the political opponent and rival of the Jama'a Islamia Party.

- **The Armenian Revolutionary Federation, Tashnak:** the Tashnak party is known as the right wing nationalist Armenian party in Lebanon. During the Lebanese war the Tashnak embraced with the other Armenian parties a policy they

described as ‘positive neutrality’.

- **The Social Democrat Henschag party:** this party represents the Armenian Left Socialist line.

- **The Arabic Socialist Baas Party:** it calls for Arabic unification. It considers all Arabic countries part of a single Arabic Nation and calls for a united Arabic state. It has reached the leadership in both Syria and Iraq. It is especially strong in the Bekaa region where its leader Kasso has always succeeded in reaching the parliament as a representative of it.

- **The Ramgavar Armenian liberal democrat party:** it is known to represent the Armenian Liberal centre right, more commonly the ‘Armenian bourgeoisie’. They boycotted the 1996 Parliament Elections and therefore some consider it close to the Christian right.

- **The Wa’ed party:** founded by late former Lebanese Force leader Elie Hobeika, this party promotes the secular ideas and calls for a new Lebanon beyond religious approaches.

- **The Marada party:** founded by late former President Suleiman Franjeh, this Maronite party has, as it had during the war, strong relations with Syria.

The aim of this chapter goal was to give an account on the historical, geopolitical and social characteristics of Lebanon. Chapter 2 will give an overview of the formation of the Lebanese sport structure. It is in Chapter 3 where we will see how these political, economical, social and mainly religious problems have affected the Lebanese sport scene.

Chapter II- The Lebanese sport characteristics

People following international sport have almost never heard about Lebanese sport; they are more or less apt observers and fans who keep abreast with the major international competitions like the Olympic Games or the Football World Cup. The Lebanese teams and athletes have never caught that kind of attention. The objective of this chapter is to show the place of Lebanon within the history of the sporting world, and examine its structure and policy.

II-1- Lebanese sport history⁷⁷

If Lebanese Independence was declared in 1943, the first Lebanese sport movements started much before. In 1920, the Ottoman Empire's occupation ended and Lebanon fell under the French Mandate who in turn allowed the Lebanese in

⁷⁷ This part of the work has been made possible thanks to the contribution of M. Joseph Sacre. Aside from being one of the most prolific figure of Lebanese sport (he was the Lebanese heavyweight boxing champion and member of the Lebanese basketball national team), Joseph Sacre has written one of the vary rare books on sport in Lebanon (Joseph Sacre 'Le sport au Liban', Beirut, Joseph Reaydé Edition, 1980). After retiring from his brilliant career, he acted as the Youth and Sports General Direction counsellor (before the creation of the Youth and Sports Ministry in February 2000, all the sport matters were dealt by the Youth and Sports General Direction). He is now head of the 'President Fouad Chehab' sport complex, one of the most important staiums in Lebanon.

the then newly created State of Great Lebanon, certain degree of autonomy. The political development of the country led to the foundation of schools that helped the beginning of the first sport movements. As with many former French colonials countries (or countries who were under the French influence), Lebanese sport was colored by the French sport culture and model. It was football, the ‘French international communicational tool’ of the 30’s that was firstly established in Lebanon. In 1933, the Lebanese Football Association was founded⁷⁸; and in 1935, the Lebanese Football Association became a member of FIFA. And basketball was introduced under the auspice of the American University of Beirut; in addition to the introduction of the bodybuilding centers. But it was mainly in 1943, the year of the Lebanese independence that Lebanese sport took a decisive step. Indeed, between 1943 and 1948, most of the first Lebanese sport federations were created. Some of these federations combined several sports; for example, wrestling, boxing and weightlifting were part of the same federation. It was also the case for swimming and skiing, and for athletics and cycling. The Lebanese Olympic Committee was created in 1948⁷⁹. Lebanon participated in its first Olympic Games in 1948 in the St Moritz Winter Games; and London Summer Games, 1952; Oslo Winter Games; and Helsinki Summer Games. In 1951 and 1953 it participated in the first and second Mediterranean Games held in Alexandria and Barcelona respectively; and in the first Pan Arabian Games in 1953, in Alexandria. After that, the decision of building the ‘Sports City’ complex in Beirut was taken. The purpose of this project was to open the way to the organisation and holding of regional games in Lebanon. In this period, thanks to the growing involvement of Lebanon in international sport, the number of sport federations and their affiliation to

⁷⁸ See Joseph Sacre *‘Le Sport Au Liban’*, (Beirut, Joseph Reaydé Edition, 1980) pp.79-90 [In French].

⁷⁹ See Sacre Joseph, *Le Sport Au Liban*, (Beirut, Joseph Reaydé Edition, 1980) p.8 [In French].

international federations increased. In 1957, the 2nd Pan Arabian Games were held in Lebanon in the newly built 'Sports City' complex. In 1959, the 3rd Mediterranean Games were hosted there. 1959 was a turning point year in the history of sport in Lebanon. The federations that used to combine several sports split and new federations were created. The government created the Youth and Sports General Direction to control and develop sport in schools and universities. While the government had to give financial and material aid to the national federations and to the Lebanese Olympic Committee, the Youth and Sports General Direction had the role of assisting them in their development and promotion. All these developments were helped by the economic stability and prosperity that Lebanon experienced during that period.⁸⁰ In the middle of the 60's, sport continued its development, and many international competitions in skiing, tennis, sailing and water skiing were held. However, this progression was stopped between 1966 and 1970 due to many factors. One of these factors was the economic events like the Bank INTRA (the most important bank in the country) bankruptcy in 1966; and the political events like the war that erupted between Israel and the Arab countries in 1967, and the explosion of the Lebanese Revolution in 1969. All these factors combined were the direct reasons behind the decline of the Lebanese sports. In 1972, the Lebanese Government, realising that sport should be modernised and adapted to the set standards of the new sport era, with the initiative of the Youth and Sports General Direction and of the Ministry of Education, has decided to undertake the task of reforming the sport sector. Taking into consideration the social, economical and demographical development of the Lebanese population, the national Olympic Committee, the sport federations and the Youth and Sports General Direction, all created a committee whose job was to establish decrees and

⁸⁰ See Sacre Joseph 1990 official report to the Lebanese Government [In French].

statutes that would be supported by the parliament. Theoretically, the approval of all the members of the Lebanese sport 'family' was expected, but, when the government decided to apply the decrees, the response was negative; and between 1972 and 1975, corruption, passivity and personal interest reigned⁸¹.

1975 to 1990 was the period of the war⁸². Despite some local events and a small participation in international events, sport knew a period of total sterility. Between 1975 and 1976, the Lebanese civil war was raging and damaging the country. All the laws and statutes that were supposed to reform sport were stopped. Despite these problems, Lebanon symbolically participated in the Mediterranean Games in Algiers and in the Montreal Olympic Games in 1976. In 1977, the momentary reestablishment of peace with a new president and a dynamic ministry cabinet, gave the Lebanese sports a new breath of life. Laws, decrees and statutes were written by the Ministry of Education in order to reform sport in the country. But again, unfortunately, some federations and members of the Lebanese Olympic Committee personally interfered to block the application of these reforms, despite these official laws and the Olympic Charter; their refusal was because of their fear of losing their position⁸³. In 1978, the political situation in the country deteriorated. The country started to suffer from lack of safety and stability. In 1979, the political situation did not get better. During this year, Lebanon participated in the Mediterranean Games in Split (Yugoslavia), the Arab General Assembly of Youth and Sports in Baghdad (Iraq) and in the Arab Youth Festival in Rabat (Morocco)⁸⁴.

⁸¹ See Joseph Sacre 1990 official report to the Lebanese Government [In French].

⁸² See Farid El Khazen, *Breakdown Of The State In Lebanon* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 1999).

⁸³ See Joseph Sacre 1990 official report to the Lebanese Government [In French].

⁸⁴ See Joseph Sacre 1990 official report to the Lebanese Government [In French].

Despite all the political difficulties, it was an ‘Olympic’ year for Lebanon. Indeed, the Lebanese sport hope was revived by a bronze medal that one of its athletes won in the Greco-Roman wrestling competition, in the Moscow Olympic Games. Again the sport reforms were voted and agreed on; however, in 1981, the preparation to the election of a new president stopped all the sport activities in the country. 1982 was a terrible year for the country and for sport in general. Lebanon was invaded by Israel, the President of the Republic was assassinated and the ‘Sports City’ complex was completely destroyed⁸⁵.

The period from 1982 to 1988 was the worst period in the history of the country on the political, economical and social sides. It considerably affected sport. The country lacked fields, materials, monitors; and the general level of sport in Lebanon declined. The Lebanese Government had many other priorities than rebuilding a structure for sport⁸⁶. And from 1988 to 1990, Lebanon was hit by two wars of almost 8 months each. It was the last two major battles that occurred in the country. The existing state of sport, made the task of reviving and rebuilding it a very difficult challenge for the next generation that had to build a new structure from almost nothing.

The Lebanese sport movement has officially started with the country’s independence in 1943. Compared to countries having almost a century of Olympic participation and domestic leagues, 50 years (if we take 1943 to 1990, the end of the war, as a reference period) is a very short period of time. Moreover, this short

⁸⁵ See Robert Fisk, *Pity The Nation* (London: Simon and Schuster, 1990), pp.282-319.

⁸⁶ See Joseph Sacre 1990 official report to the Lebanese Government [In French].

period has been interrupted by more than two decades of political tension and wars. This has not given enough time to create a significant sport culture, necessary to develop mass participation, fan base and good sport results. The small population and poor economy of the country did not help the situation much. The next part of this chapter is devoted to Lebanese sport international achievements from 1930 to 1980.

II-2- Lebanese sport international achievements from 1930 to 1980⁸⁷

Between 1930 and 1980, Lebanon's success in sport has been mainly achieved, like in many other developing countries⁸⁸, in disciplines that do not require a very high financial investment: bodybuilding, weightlifting and Greco-Roman wrestling.

⁸⁷ The information in this part is obtained from the official report that Joseph Sacre has given to the Lebanese Government in the early 90's. These sport results were all what Lebanon has achieved before 1980. After that, competitive sports have almost stopped for 10 years. In his report, Joseph Sacre, has said, that in a country where international sport stars were as famous as in their country, despite a very limited support from the government and a very small geographic area and population, Lebanon has reached good results.

⁸⁸ See the International Olympic Committee official website statistics. Azerbaidjian, Georgia and Thailand won most of their 2004 Olympic Games medals in sports that do not require an expensive infrastructure: Boxing, tae kwon do, judo, wrestling and weightlifting.

In **bodybuilding**, Georges Manoukian won a bronze medal in the European Championship in Paris in 1939. Malih Aleiwan reached the 4th place in the Mr. Universe trophy (a very prestigious bodybuilding competition) in 1957, in Teheran. Actually, Malih Aleiwan has been the main promoter of bodybuilding, powerlifting and weightlifting in Lebanon. An even much greater achievement was achieved by Samir Bannout who won the gold medal in the 1979 World Amateur Championship in Columbus. He then turned professional and won the 1983 Mr. Olympia competition, the most important professional bodybuilding competition in the world⁸⁹, which turned athletes like Arnold Schwarzenegger and Lou Ferrigno into mainstream stars⁹⁰.

In **weightlifting**, Mustafa Laham came 5th in the Helsinki Olympic Games in 1952, and won the gold medal in the Mediterranean Games in Barcelona in 1955. Mohammed Traboulsi was one of the only four men that have brought an Olympic medal to Lebanon when he won the silver in the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich. Traboulsi was also gold medallist in the 1979 Mediterranean games in Split, and in the 1979 Asian Games in Tokyo.

Greco-Roman wrestling has been the sport where Lebanon had attained the highest level of success in the Olympic Games. It has given three of the four Olympic medals of Lebanese sport history. Zakaria Chehab was the first man to bring an Olympic medal to Lebanon, when he got a silver medal in the 1952

⁸⁹ See International Federation of Bodybuilding official website 1983 archives.

⁹⁰ See 'Mr.Olympia' official website 1975 to 2004 archives.

Helsinki Olympic Games. In the same games, Khalil Taha won a silver medal. In 1980 Moscow Olympic Games, Hassan Bchara won a bronze medal.

Lebanon also achieved a success in other minor sports like **water skiing** when Simon Khoury won two silver medals in 1955 and 1959 World Championships. In **shooting**, Maurice Tabet won two gold medals in the 1956 and 1957 European Championships and came 4th in the 1960 World Championship, in Rome.

In team sports, Lebanon was able to achieve success in international school **volley ball** competition when it got a gold medal in the World School Games in Strasbourg in 1967 and in the 1968 Lisbon World School Games. At a university level, Lebanon got a silver medal in the 1947 University Games in Paris and a gold medal in the 1951 University Games in Luxembourg.

II-3- The Lebanese sport achievements in the post-war period (from 1991 to 2004)

By the end of the war in October 1990⁹¹, 10 years had passed since Hassan Bchara brought to Lebanon its last Olympic medal. In this decade of war and destructions,

⁹¹ See '*Al-Nahar*' Newspaper archives, October to December 1990 [In Arabic].

the Lebanese sport movement had almost stopped and the sport standards went significantly down; at the time when international sport entered an era of professionalism⁹² that has boosted its standards to a level that seem impossible to reach for a country like Lebanon; which, in addition to its small population and low economy, had suffered 15 years of conflicts. 1991 marked the first year of the post-war period. For the population, it was the time to dress the wounds. The main goal of the government was the country's reconstruction and the rehabilitation of a devastated economy⁹³. Secondary or minor sectors like sport were put on hold. It took more than five years for Lebanese sport to re-establish itself. At an international level, Lebanon was not expected to achieve any given success; the main goal was just to be able to participate in the international competitions. In football, Lebanon took part again in the Asian zone qualifiers for the 1994 World Cup⁹⁴. Thanks to the Olympic Solidarity Programme⁹⁵, Lebanon has been able to send some of its athletes to participate in the Olympic Games. Without this aid programme, Lebanon could just have been able to send four of its athletes in all the Olympic Games from 1992 to 2004. Indeed, only Jean-Claude Rabbath (he got the minima to qualify in the men high-jump event in the 2000 Sydney and 2004 Athens Olympic Games), Sherine Njeim (she got the minima to qualify for the women skiing event in the 2002 Salt-Lake City Olympic Games), Joe Salem (he got the minima to qualify for a men shooting event in the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games) and Nicki Fuerstauer (this Austrian, naturalized Lebanese got the minima to qualify for the men skiing event in the 2002 Salt-Lake City Olympic Games)⁹⁶ have been

⁹² See Patrick Bouchet and Mohammad Kaach article, 'Existe-t-il un « modèle sportif » dans les pays africains francophones ?' STAPS revue N.65 [In French].

⁹³ See *'Al-Nahar'* newspaper 1991 archives [In Arabic].

⁹⁴ See Asian Football Confederation official website 1994 World Cup Asian qualifiers.

⁹⁵ See Chifflet and Gouda article, 'Olympisme et identité en Afrique Noire Francophone' STAPS scientific revue N.41, France and Benin, 1996 [In French].

⁹⁶ See *'L'Orient Le Jour'* September 2000, February 2002 and August 2004 archives [In French].

able to qualify for the Olympic Games. In 2000, in Rugby League, thanks to the Lebanese-Australian community in Sydney, Lebanon has been able to qualify for the 2000 Rugby League World Cup⁹⁷. Some other achievements were also attained in minor sport international amateur competitions like amateur bodybuilding⁹⁸ where Ahmed Haidar won the 1998 Amateur Bodybuilding World Championship and participated in the 1998, 2002 and 2004 Mr.Olympia Competition, the ‘real’ professional bodybuilding world championship⁹⁹; and wushu¹⁰⁰ in which Joe Kamel came second in the 2000 Wushu World Cup.

It was therefore, clear, from this very small ‘effective’ participation in world sport, that the main goal of Lebanese sport was simply to be able to exist. This ‘existence’ was assumed to involve developing sports locally through improving the three basic components, namely: sport standards, mass participation and fan base. To this extent, the first step taken by the Lebanese Government was the organisation of the 1997 Pan Arabian Games in the newly rebuilt ‘Sports City’ complex in Beirut. For it is a known fact that many minor sport countries, not being able to engage significantly in the Olympic Games, do organize and participate in what is called the regional games tournaments: African, Mediterranean and Arab Games. These games were described by De Coubertin as being the ‘kinder-garden’ of the Olympic movement¹⁰¹. These games that were held in Lebanon have known a

⁹⁷ See Rugby League International Federation 2000 World Cup archives.

⁹⁸ See International Bodybuilding Federation official website 1998 archives.

⁹⁹ See ‘Mr.Olympia’ official website 1998, 2002 and 2004 archives.

¹⁰⁰ See interview with wushu athletes Joe Kamel done in February 2003 in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon. Wushu is a modern exhibition and full-contact sport based on traditional Chinese martial arts, created in the People’s Republic of China.

¹⁰¹ See Sylvain Adami article, ‘Les Jeux méditerranéens. Un reflet de la situation géopolitique de l’espace méditerranéen’, in Christophe CHICLET & Kolë GJELOSHAJ (dir.), ‘Sport et politique en Méditerranée’, Paris, L’Harmattan, pp. 71-81, 2004 [In French].

significant success because, for the first time since the end of the war, the Lebanese people took notice of the existence of its sport movement¹⁰². Between 1996 and 2000, the Lebanese Government undertook the construction of two international stadiums in Sidon and Tripoli in order to host the 2000 AFC Asian Football Cup¹⁰³. If the 1997 Pan Arabian Games were a relative success, the 2000 AFC Football Cup was a complete failure. Lebanon was eliminated from the first round after loosing 4-0 to Iran in the opening round; and was not able to win any game. The stadiums were empty for most of the games and Dato Velapan, the AFC General Secretary said that ‘these were not stadiums but cemeteries’. This big ‘blow’ for Lebanese sport was to a large extent the result of the lack of technical preparation of the national team; and the lack of research around international standards on behalf of the major Lebanese sport authorities: General Direction of Youth and Sports and the Lebanese Football Federation.

Actually, most of the Lebanese post-war achievements in sport took place in basketball. All the elements to make basketball a successful local ‘product’ were provided. A group of millionaires, led by media ‘giant’ Antoine Choueireh have invested massive budgets in local teams and in the organisation of Arab and Asian competitions. This millionaires’ lobby has been able to sell the television rights of the 1st division league to the LBC (Lebanese Broadcasting Company), the number 1 television in Lebanon. In 1999, those rights reached \$1 million¹⁰⁴. In the same year, a budget of \$1284000 and not less than 469 publicity spots¹⁰⁵ were set aside

¹⁰² See ‘*Al-Nahar*’ newspaper July 1997 archives [In Arabic].

¹⁰³ See ‘*L’Orient-Le-Jour*’ newspaper October 2000 archives [In French].

¹⁰⁴ See Lebanese Broadcasting Company International (LBCI) official website, 1999 archives.

¹⁰⁵ See St.Joseph University Master’s Thesis in sociology, Zeina Tohme Adaime, ‘Analysis of a success: Lebanese basketball’ (2002) [In French].

for the organisation of the Asian Basketball Cup. This lobby has also been able to improve the standards of the Basketball 1st division by importing foreign players. This improvement has also been put into effect in the upholding of the Lebanese Basketball national team through introducing and in a way adopting the foreign players, and importing players who are of Lebanese origins. For example, Joe Vogel, an American player naturalised by the Lebanese Government and who played centre in the Lebanese national team¹⁰⁶. At a grass root level, these steps taken by the Lebanese Government and financed by the main basketball promoters, have been channeled by a very efficient youth development programme furnished by the Lebanese Basketball Federation. More importantly, the principal aspect of the basketball success was its ability to market itself and develop a fan base. This was mainly done by opposing the main clubs, each one representing a religious community: Sagesse, which represented the Christian community and Sporting ('Riyadeh'), the Moslem community¹⁰⁷.

These whole elements seemed very fruitful. Basketball became the most practised¹⁰⁸ and popular sport on TV¹⁰⁹. It has, by the beginning of the year 2000, in terms of advertising, largely overtaken football, which was traditionally the number one sport in Lebanon during the 20th century. Basketball was also the leader in Lebanese sport in terms of results, which are essential to take into consideration for the analysis of any sort of sport success. Sagesse, the Lebanese basketball club

¹⁰⁶ See Lebanese Basketball Federation official website (2002 Lebanese national team roster).

¹⁰⁷ See Leah Boukhater article, 'Basket au Liban', 'Outre-Terre. Revue française de géopolitique', n° 8, pp. 129-130 [In French]

¹⁰⁸ See Lebanese Basketball Federation official website 2000 statistic. If we add the number of recreational, school, university and competitive players, basketball will outnumber football.

¹⁰⁹ See LBC and Future TV official websites 2000 ratings.

champion, has won successively the Asian Basketball Championship in 1999, 2000 and 2004. Lebanon won the 2nd place in the Asian Basketball Championship in 2001; and succeeded in qualifying for the 2002 Basketball World Championship in Atlanta¹¹⁰.

II-4- The face of Lebanese sport in 2004

The basketball success should not be taken as a reference nor should it hide the ‘real’ status of Lebanese sport in the beginning of the 20th century. As we said there are mainly three factors that indicate the importance of sport in a country:

- The size of the sport movement consisting of the licensees participating.
- The fan base drawn by this movement.
- The international results obtained by its athletes.

If basketball has been able to reach a satisfying degree of success in those 3 aspects, the same cannot be said about all the other 33 sports part of the Lebanese Olympic Committee. Actually, it is not expected that a country of only 3 million inhabitants could have high potentials of sport participation, fan base and sport results. Moreover, if the Lebanese population size is small, the size of the Lebanese sport community is even smaller. In Lebanon, 40% of the population practise what

¹¹⁰ See International Basketball Federation official website, archives for the 2002 World Basketball Championships.

is commonly called 'sports for all' (fitness, jogging, recreational walking, beach games, unofficial cross country contests....)¹¹¹. In fact, the number of the recreational sport clubs is incredibly high considering the geographic size of the country¹¹². The same thing cannot be said about competitive sports. Football, for example has 7000 registered licensees; it is one of the three largest Lebanese sport federations, the others being volleyball and basketball¹¹³. This number represents 0.17% of the Lebanese population (7000 licensees/ 3432000 inhabitants.) In France, the football licensees represent 3.33% (2 066 399 licensees/ 60 000 000)¹¹⁴. The proportion of the football licensees is almost 20 times higher in France than in Lebanon. If football, the game in which the largest part of the Lebanese youth is attracted to, has such a small proportion of athletes inside the Lebanese population, it clearly means that competitive sport is not yet well established in the Lebanese culture. Another sign of this lack of competitive sport culture is the very low participation of women. Indeed, a study conducted with 7 members of 7 different federations (football, volleyball, canoe-kayak, wushu, athletics, judo and squash) have shown a very low participation of women on the Lebanese sport scene. Women's football does not yet exist (the plan to develop it is still in process). In volleyball, there are 10 times more men than women. In wushu, out of 800 licensees, there are 700 men and 100 women. In squash, 90% of the licensees are men and 10% are women. Things are slightly better for judo (25% women), kayak (35 to 40%) and athletics (40%)¹¹⁵. Concerning the fan base, most of the federations

¹¹¹ See Joseph Sacre 1990 official report to the Lebanese Government.

¹¹² See 2003 Lebanese Ministry of Finances list of declared health clubs. There is almost one gym in every village and area of Lebanon [In Arabic].

¹¹³ See Interview with the Lebanese F.A General Director Joseph Moawad done in September 2003 in Beirut, Lebanon.

¹¹⁴ See French Football Federation official website, 2004 statistics.

¹¹⁵ See interviews of different Lebanese sport persons done from February to September 2003, in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

claim that they are unable to collect any money from gate receipts or television rights¹¹⁶.

In the relation to the standards the elite level in the different sports, there are mainly 2 legitimate rankings used today by sport specialists to classify the place of a country in sport:

- The total Olympic medal count¹¹⁷.
- The 'Havas Group' sport ranking¹¹⁸.

The total Olympic medal count includes all the summer and winter Olympic Games since Athens 1896. In this ranking, Lebanon, which has participated since 1948 is placed 98th. (Croatia and Slovenia, having approximately the same demographic size, with less than 10 years of existence, are placed 53rd and 70th respectively.)

The 'Havas Group' ranking is a more modern, general and accurate one. It started at the end of the year 2004 and was first published in December 2005. It includes 51 sports, 130 disciplines and 1314 events. It takes into consideration the gold, silver and bronze medals won by all the countries in the last summer and winter Olympic Games (Athens 2004 and Salt Lake City 2002), in the last world

¹¹⁶ See Lebanese heads of federations interviews from February to September 2003, Beirut and suburbs, Lebanon.

¹¹⁷ See International Olympic Committee official website, 'Olympic Games' statistics.

¹¹⁸ See Havas Group official website, 2005 'Havas Group' nations sport ranking.

championships of each sport and the different International sport federations rankings. This ranking is much more up to date and complete than the total Olympic medal count because it takes into consideration what the different nations have achieved in a much large number of sports (51 by comparison to the 35 of the Olympic programme) in the last 2 years. There are 103 countries present in this ranking. The 103rd ranked country is Vietnam with 1 bronze medal. Lebanon is not even present in this ranking. Without any doubt, sport, as such, has not yet attained the level of importance inside the Lebanese society worth of the international one. Before trying to explain the reasons for this state of affairs, we will give, in the next part of this chapter, an analysis of the Lebanese sport structure.

II-5- The organisation of sport in Lebanon¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ This part of the work has been done thanks to the following books, reports and documents:

- Sacre Joseph, *Le Sport Au Liban*, (Beirut, Joseph Reaydé Edition, 1980) [In French].
- Joseph Sacre 1990 official report to the Lebanese Government [In French].
- Report done in the year 2005 under the protocol of the cooperation between the French Embassy and the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports made by Henri-Pierre Gazzeri et Jean-François Isnard concerning the valuation mission for the implementation of coaching programmes [In French].
- Decree 6997, signed in 2001 by the Lebanese Government and the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports [In Arabic].
- Law 629, signed in November 2004 by the Lebanese Government and the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports [In Arabic].
- Ministry of Youth and Sports Catalogue that explains the rules and regulations of the association and the federation. This catalogue was published in 1994 and therefore existed back when the Ministry of Youth and Sports was the General Direction of Youth and Sports [In Arabic].
- St. Joseph University Master Thesis in sociology, Zeina Tohme Adaime, 'Analysis of a success: Lebanese basketball' (2002) [In French].
- Interviews with different Lebanese sport persons done from February to September 2003, in

One of the principal targets of this research is to provide an explanation of the Lebanese sport system. The official structure of this system is represented by a pyramid¹²⁰. It shows the functioning of the official system. However, it does not represent the totality of the Lebanese sport movement. To give an accurate account about the latter, all the different actors should be taken into consideration. They are¹²¹:

- **The government**, represented by the Education Ministry and the General Direction of Youth and Sports (before becoming the Ministry of Youth and Sports in February 2000). Its role is to give official permit to the clubs, the federations and the Olympic Committee; it also has the power to dissolve them. The government has the charge of setting up the sport policy, budget and has the role of supervising sport at a national scale. Through the Ministry of Education, it organises and manages school sport.

- **The Lebanese Olympic Committee**, which represents all the national federations and is responsible for the participation of Lebanon in the regional and Olympic Games.

- **The national federations**, the members of which are elected by the clubs of their respective sports; their task is to develop their sports at the different levels (elite

Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

¹²⁰ See : - Table 2 of the Appendix.

- Joseph Sacre 1990 official report to the Lebanese Government [In French].

¹²¹ See Joseph Sacre 1990 official report to the Lebanese Government [In French].

level and mass participation including grass-root competition and recreational sport) and to prepare a team that will represent Lebanon in the international competitions organised by the international federations of their sports.

- **The University Sport Federation** that has the role of organising the National University Championships and preparing for the World University Games.

- Sport has an important role in the **Army** where it is considered to be an important moral and physical activity. The Army has produced many Lebanese champions in athletics, skiing and horse-riding.

- The last category is what we call the '**sports for all**'. There is not any official structure for these activities (fitness, jogging, recreational walking....) but they are mentioned because they are practised by 40% of the population.

- A structure for **corporate** (private and public companies) and **local communities** sport has not existed yet in Lebanon.

If the nature of the relations between the different sport bodies has been explained by Joseph Sacre in 1990, it took more than ten years before the Lebanese Government took the initiative of defining the functioning of the Lebanese sport

system. This was first done in the Decree 6997¹²², signed by the Lebanese Government and the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports in 2001. This official document explains the rules and regulations of each Lebanese sport body (association, federation, Lebanese Olympic Committee), their relation between each other and between them and the Ministry of Youth and Sports. This decree was signed in December 2001, almost two years after the General Direction of Youth and Sports became the Ministry of Youth and Sports in February 2000. The government and the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports have then signed the Law 629¹²³, which explains the interior organisation of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. This law was implemented in November 2004.

Like most of the administrative bodies in Lebanon, and because of some 25 years of French mandate, the model of the different sport bodies (association, federations and the Lebanese Olympic Committee), has its inspiration in French precedents. We should not forget that the first sport federation (the Lebanese Football Federation) was created in the period of the French colonialism and that most of the others were created just after its end¹²⁴. Actually, most of the countries that have emerged from under the French colonialism have adopted the French sport policy model¹²⁵. Indeed, some items taken from the interviews explain that the official structure of the Lebanese sport federations follow the French or the Olympic

¹²² See Decree 6997, signed in 2001 by the Lebanese Government and the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports [In Arabic].

¹²³ See Law 629, signed in November 2004 by the Lebanese Government and the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports [In Arabic].

¹²⁴ See Sacre Joseph, *Le Sport Au Liban*, (Beirut, Joseph Reaydé Edition, 1980) pp.10-201 [In French].

¹²⁵ See Chifflet and Gouda article, 'Olympisme et identité en Afrique Noire Francophone' STAPS scientifique revue N.41, France and Benin, 1996 [In French].

model, which are to a certain extent very similar, considering that the French were behind the foundation of Olympism¹²⁶. In all the federations interviewed, we almost always have the same ‘panel’: President, Vice-President, General Secretary, and other members that are all volunteers. Only football and basketball, due to their size, have employees working full-time¹²⁷.

The financing of these federations does not follow any order or system¹²⁸. The information gathered from the interviews does not show any uniformity in the sources of budgets. For example, the Canoe-Kayak Federation is exclusively financed by the government¹²⁹. Others like squash, wushu and athletics function on the government financial aid and the contribution fees from clubs. Athletics has, in addition, a financial support from the International Athletics federation¹³⁰. The Judo federation has until now only functioned thanks to individual and passionate private initiatives¹³¹. Football and volleyball, due to their size, have also different sources

¹²⁶ See International Olympic Committee official website, ‘The movement’.

¹²⁷ See: - Tables 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 of the Appendix.

- Interviews with different Lebanese sport persons done from February to September 2003 in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

¹²⁸ There is not any official document, archive or bibliography relating to the financing of the Lebanese sport federations. This part of the work has been done thanks to interviews done in Beirut and its suburbs to 7 federations’ heads in the sports of canoe-Kayak, football, judo, squash, athletics, volleyball and wushu from February 2003 to September 2003.

¹²⁹ See interview with the Lebanese Canoe-Kayak Federation President Mazen Ramadan, May 2003, Beirut, Lebanon.

¹³⁰ See interviews with the Lebanese Squash Federation Vice-President Roy Di Ferro, the Lebanese Athletics Federation General Secretary Raymond Behlok and the Lebanese Wushu Federation General Secretary Georges Nseir, from February to May 2003, Beirut, Lebanon.

¹³¹ See interview with the Lebanese Judo Federation President François Saade done in May 2003, in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon.

of investment¹³². The sources of income for football are TV contract, stadium ticket sales, souvenirs and sponsorship. The government help them 'when required' (for the organisation of major tournament, for example) with the use of facilities. In volleyball, the incomes are clubs' contribution fees, sponsors and TV rights.

According to the stated discussions, one can safely deduce that Lebanese sport could be evaluated after understanding its history, achievements, size, structure, and financing model. We will, in the next chapter, focus on its most important aspect: the difficulties it is facing in the beginning of the 21st century.

¹³² See interviews done with the Lebanese Volleyball Federation General Secretary Wallid Younes and the Lebanese Football Federation General Manager Joseph Moawad, in June and September 2003 in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

Chapter III- Difficulties faced by Lebanese sport

III-1- The Lebanese sport spiral of difficulties

The small number of participants is the first hurdle faced by the sport institutions, for such a limited number is insufficient to form a base large enough for the formation of elite athletes in the different sports. Such deficiency is apt to lead to poor sport results. A low number of athletes will also undoubtedly decrease the sport fans base of a country¹³³. In a research carried out at the Bocconi University in Milan, it was found out that in the region of Lombardia, which has a rich heritage of sport culture¹³⁴, about 1million young people play football and hope to become football players. One of them will reach Serie A (Italian Football First Division). The football fans come from the other 999999 players¹³⁵. This concept is applied in Lebanon where most of the federations, with their low number of participants are unable to collect any money from gate receipts or television

¹³³ See Table 8 of the Appendix.

¹³⁴ See Italian Basketball Federation (FIP) and Italian Football Federation (FIGC) official websites. There are several basketball and football champions clubs from the Lombardia region: Varese (basketball), Inter Milan (football), AC Milan (football) [In Italian].

¹³⁵ See the ‘sport industry’ research, strategic criteria for analysing the sport context (2002), Bocconi University. Gianfranco Piantoni.

rights¹³⁶. With such a small sport movement made of a low number of sport participants and fans, the poor sport results will undoubtedly follow.

The low number of competitors, the small fan base and the poor standards are generally the signs of a lack of competitive sport culture¹³⁷. The place that is supposed to originate a sport culture is the school. It is there where the youth gets hooked onto competitive sports, and, consequently, integrates it as a part of their culture. Wallid Younis, the General Secretary of the Lebanese Volleyball Federation commented on this concept and said: ‘We need to develop volleyball in the schools because it is there where the players are formed¹³⁸.’ But a Lebanese school sport federation has not been yet founded¹³⁹. Today, some schools have created organised sport leagues: The Evangelical school leagues¹⁴⁰, Nike Inter School League¹⁴¹. Even if there has not been yet an official Lebanese schools’ sport federation regulating all the schools’ competitions, it is clear that some schools have taken a step further in the development of competitive sports. It is worth noting here that work on founding such a federation has actually started in the scholastic year 2004-2005.

¹³⁶ See Lebanese heads of federations’ interviews done from February to September 2003 in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

¹³⁷ See the « sport industry » research, strategic criteria for analysing the sport context (2002), Bocconi University. Gianfranco Piantoni.

¹³⁸ See interview to the Lebanese Volleyball Federation General Secretary Wallid Younes done in June 2003, in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon.

¹³⁹ See Joseph Sacre 1990 official report to the Lebanese Government [In French].

¹⁴⁰ Oral interview with ski athlete Cesar Keyrouz done in February 2003.

¹⁴¹ Oral interview with Athletics coach and teacher Antoine Sebaaly done in October 2006.

The dominant prevailing problem is the one concerning the physical education subject in the schools. Until now, there is not any required and established programme for physical education in the Lebanese educational system¹⁴². In the test that the students sit for to obtain the Lebanese Baccalaureate and to graduate from schools, there is no physical education test. This fact would indirectly undermine the importance of offering physical education courses in the schools, and as a result, sport will not be taken seriously by the students. Actually, the Ministry of Youth and Sports or the former General Direction of Youth and Sports was never responsible of developing sport and physical education in schools. There is not any official stipulation that permits them to do so.¹⁴³ And the Lebanese Ministry of Education, after the war, never set the priority to develop physical education in schools. They also did not have, in 1990, a sufficient number of physical education specialists to implement any sort of sport programmes¹⁴⁴. The first step taken by the Ministry of Education was to decide to organise the first Lebanese School Championship in 2004¹⁴⁵. But nothing has been done yet to implement physical education courses in the schools as a compulsory subject. Consequently, most of the schools offered physical education as a voluntary activity or have not offered it at all. As a result, there are also a low number of physical education teachers and sport coaches. In fact, the universities, the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Education will not take a decisive step to develop programmes to graduate sport and physical education specialists when there is no official need for them. Actually, the Ministry of Youth and Sports does not provide any coaching

¹⁴² Oral interview with Lebanese Ministry of Education's advisor Najwa Fuleihan, done in February 2008.

¹⁴³ See Law 629 signed in November 2004 by the government and Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports [In Arabic].

¹⁴⁴ In 1990, there were not any university in Lebanon that has started a graduate physical education curriculum.

¹⁴⁵ In process; it started in the year 2004-2005.

programmes¹⁴⁶; there are only 4 universities in Lebanon that offer physical education and give diplomas in sport: The University of Balamand (this university in the north of Lebanon was the first one to start a sport sciences programme in 1993), the Lebanese University, the Antonine University and Notre-Dame University. In the year 2004, there were, in these 4 universities, an estimated number of about 400 physical education and sport students¹⁴⁷. This total includes the students who had graduated and those who were still learning. This number is relatively very low considering that the physical education departments of the different universities in Torino in Italy have more than 17000 PES students¹⁴⁸ by themselves, and that the city of Torino has less than 1 Million inhabitants¹⁴⁹ (4 times less than Lebanon). This undermining of the importance of physical education is without doubt one of the main reasons behind the lack of sport culture in Lebanon. That is why nations, having approximately the same demographic size like New Zealand (4 millions inhabitants: Rugby, cricket and sailing world leader¹⁵⁰), Slovenia (2 millions inhabitants: Basketball and skiing world powerhouse¹⁵¹) and Croatia (4 millions inhabitants: 2003 handball World champion, 1998 Football World Cup 3rd place taker and basketball top European

¹⁴⁶ See report done in the year 2005 under the protocol of the cooperation between the French embassy and the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports written by Henri-Pierre Gazzeri et Jean-François Isnard concerning the valuation mission for the implementation of coaching programmes [In French].

¹⁴⁷ See registration offices 2004 list of the PES students of the University of Balamand, Antonine University, Lebanese University and Notre-Dame University.

¹⁴⁸ See 2006 protocol between the University of Torino and the Antonine University in Lebanon [In French].

¹⁴⁹ See 'turismo e promozione' citta' di Torino (The city of Torino's history) 2004 catalogue [In Italian].

¹⁵⁰ See International Rugby Board, International Cricket Council and America's cup official websites 2004 rankings.

¹⁵¹ See 2004 International Basketball Federation official website, world ranking, National Basketball Association official website, list of players and International Skiing Federation official website, rankings.

countries¹⁵²) have a much more developed competitive sport culture, and have a much higher place in the sporting world. For example New Zealand has a school and collegiate sport scholarship system very similar to that of Australia and the United States¹⁵³. Croatia and Slovenia are the heir of former Yugoslavia, where, every school, in order to have an official permit to open, must have a developed sport infrastructure, and where every student, from his early childhood, must choose a ‘speciality’ sport to be added in his curriculum¹⁵⁴.

There is no doubt that the small size of the Lebanese sports is an obstacle that hinders its development. However, the spiral of difficulties is much more due to a lack of competitive sport culture than to the small population of the country. The main purpose of this part of the research is to analyse the other sources of difficulties that prevent the development of sports in Lebanon.

III-2- Difficulties faced by the Lebanese federations

¹⁵² See International Basketball Federation official website 2004 rankings, International Handball Federation official website 2003 World Championships archives and International Football Federation official website 1998 Football World Cup archives.

¹⁵³ See John Nauright (ed.), *Sport, Power And Society In New Zealand: Historical And Contemporary Perspectives* (1995).

¹⁵⁴ Oral interview with Mico Martic, Croatian national team futsal coach, done in November 2004.

This part delineates the feedback gathered from heads of the various sport federations. The intention was to identify the difficulties that they are all facing, according to their experience in the field, when they were interviewed¹⁵⁵. The main problem that was commonly brought up was the lack of resources, needed to develop their sports. In this part, we will try to show how real the impact of these disadvantages of the development of sport is. This is done by comparing the conditions facing sports in Lebanon to the ones of France¹⁵⁶. The objective of this comparison is not to try to bring Lebanon to the level of that of France, but to show, in numbers, what are the differences in finances and resources between a top ten Olympic-ranked sporting countries and Lebanon. This could probably prove the idea, mentioned before; of how intrinsic is the deficit that could be caused by the small size of the Lebanese sport movement.

The Lebanese Canoe-Kayak Federation usually gets from the government \$2000 to \$3000 a year. Without comparing this budget to the one given to this sport in other countries, this amount of money is logically insufficient for the preparation of an Olympic programme (i.e. Canoe-kayak is an Olympic sport¹⁵⁷). \$3000 is barely enough to cover the travel expenses for an athlete to a single competition. Moreover, there is a very small number of licensees. According to the General Secretary of the Lebanese Canoe-Kayak federation, the low standards of Lebanon in this sport are largely due to the little number of clubs and licensees.

¹⁵⁵ See interviews with different Lebanese heads of federations from February to September 2003, in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

¹⁵⁶ See Table 9 of the Appendix.

¹⁵⁷ See the International Olympic Committee official website 'summer sports programme'.

The Lebanese Football Federation has a budget of 1 Million dollars a year. There are 150 clubs and 7000 registered licensees. (France, an elite country in football, has 2 066 399 licensees and 19731 clubs ¹⁵⁸). According to the General Director of this federation, the fact that Lebanon is ranked 116 out of 200 ¹⁵⁹ is largely due to the budget that he considers very low. Joseph Moawad, the Lebanese Football Federation General Director, believes that apart from the small budget, the difficulties that this sport is facing in this country is due to the lack of infrastructure resulting from the economical situation of the country.

François Saadé, the President of the Lebanese Judo Federation, stated that despite the small size of the federation of his sport (400 to 500 licensees. This number is very far from the one of the French Judo Federation – France is a leader in World Judo - that has 800 000 licensees ¹⁶⁰) and an almost non-existent budget (the money invested always come from private initiative), judo's standards in Lebanon are 'not bad'. He says that it could also become even better if it did not lack financial support and if the war had not destroyed the country for 15 years.

The Lebanese Squash Federation gets \$2000 a year from the Lebanese Government. Like the canoe-kayak federation, the budget for squash is very low, not enough for it to function effectively. With 9 clubs and 180 licensees (France, which has its number 1, Thierry Lincou, ranked 4th in the International

¹⁵⁸ See French Football Federation official website statistics.

¹⁵⁹ See International Football Federation official website, world ranking in September 2003.

¹⁶⁰ See French Judo Federation official website, 2004 number of participants.

Professional Squash Association has 21 655 licensees and 382 licensees.¹⁶¹), it is very small. For Roy Di Ferro, the Vice-President of the Lebanese Squash Federation, lack of money is what has mainly led Lebanon to be ranked in the world lowest category in this sport. He also thinks that if squash became an Olympic sport, the Lebanese Squash Federation would probably have more financial support from the Lebanese Government and the Lebanese Olympic Committee.

The Lebanese Athletics Federation has a budget of 50 to \$60000 a year. It has 18 clubs and 600 to 700 registered licensees (France, the organiser of the last world championship in 2003 has 177509 licensees¹⁶²). For its General Secretary, Raymond Behlok, the main problem preventing the development of athletics in Lebanon is the lack of money and media attention.

Volleyball has one of the largest federations in Lebanon: 218 clubs and 6000 licensees. France, the bronze medalist of the 2002 Volley-Ball World Championship has 101343 licensees and 1816 clubs¹⁶³. The budget of the Lebanese Volley-Ball Federation is \$150000 a year. Its level is so far below of the top Asian countries that Lebanon, in order to reduce its expenditures, does not even participate in the continental competitions. According to Walid Younes, the General Secretary of the Lebanese Volley-Ball Federation, the civil war is the first

¹⁶¹ See French Squash Federation official website, 2004 number of participants [In French].

¹⁶² See French Athletics Federation official website, 2004 number of participants [In French].

¹⁶³ See French Volley-Ball Federation official website, 2004 number of participants [In French].

prime cause responsible for the difficulties that Lebanon is facing in sport. The lack of media's interest is also another cause of the problems.

In wushu, the budget is 6 to \$7000 a year. There are 13 clubs and 7 to 800 registered licensees. According to George Nseir, the General Secretary of the Lebanese Wushu Federation, Lebanon is ranked 27 out of 76. The result is encouraging; even if Lebanon already belongs to the first half in the wushu world, George Nseir believes that the results would be even better if the wushu practitioners had more support from the Lebanese Government and more media attention.

The lack of resources is not the only problem faced by the different Lebanese sport federations. A big problem remains the unclear apparatus in the structure and budget functioning. As it was mentioned before, Joseph Sacre was the first to explain the relation between the different agents of the Lebanese sport structure. A more recent explanation was given when the Ministry of Youth and Sports has officially signed the law 629 and the decree 6997¹⁶⁴. The Law 629 explains the interior organisation of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. This Law, which only concerns the Ministry of Youth and Sports, was implemented in November 2004. The official article that is supposed to define the functioning of the Lebanese sport system is the Decree 6997. The latter explains the regulations of each Lebanese sport body (association, federation and Lebanese Olympic Committee), their relation between each other and their relation between them and the Ministry of Youth and Sports. This decree, signed in December 2001, is still barely applied, understood or even known. This problem was revealed in an interview with the

¹⁶⁴ See Law 629 (signed in November 2004) and the decree 6997 (signed in 2001) [In Arabic].

General Secretary of the Lebanese Volley-Ball Federation Walid Younes, when he said:

‘We are still waiting for the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports to become a real Ministry. There is not yet an apparatus. Our relation with the Minister is very good, but unfortunately, there is not yet a mechanism in the Ministry of Youth and Sports defining its role and its link with the federations, so as to clearly know how to work with them. There is also no clear standard statute explaining the relations between the Lebanese Olympic Committee and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the relations between the Lebanese Olympic Committee and the federations and the relations between the federations and the Ministry of Youth and Sports. All these links and relations should be explained clearly, so as every sport body on the Lebanese scene could understand what are its functions and duties.’¹⁶⁵

If the legal relation between the different sport bodies suffers from a lack of clarification and application, a system of budget distribution is completely non-existent. In England, for example, from £1 spent on lottery, 33 pence go to what we call lottery commission. The latter includes heritage, community, education and sport (38% of the 33 pence). It is how UK Sport (United Kingdom Sport) is partly financed¹⁶⁶. In Lebanon, such thing does not exist yet. Money is invested without any system or logical order. This problem is found upon analysing the federations’ sources of budget that differs according to the funds/finance each of these receives..

¹⁶⁵ See interview with the Lebanese Volleyball Federation General Secretary Wallid Younes done in June 2003 in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon.

¹⁶⁶ Oral interview with Alexandra Russell, UK (United Kingdom) sport administrator, done in September 2006.

Without a clear structure and budget, it is difficult for any federation to work towards long-term plan and achieve durable success.

The federations also face another main issue of Lebanese sport: The centralisation of its structure. A structure for local community sport does not exist yet in Lebanon¹⁶⁷. Beirut (the Lebanese capital), and its suburbs hold more than 90% of the Lebanese official sport organisation. Besides the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Lebanese Olympic Committee, 34 from the 35 Lebanese federations have their registered office in Beirut and its suburban area¹⁶⁸. The centralisation of the federations is directly reflected in the Lebanese sport movement: from the 12 clubs engaged in the Lebanese football First Division for the 2003-2004 season, 10 (more than 80%) belong to an area close to Beirut (Olympic Beirut, Nijmeh, Ahed, Sagesse, Chabab Sahel, Al Ansar, Homentmen, Mabarra, Homenmen, Safa) one to the North of Lebanon (Salam Zghorta) and one to the South (Tadamon Tyr).¹⁶⁹ From the eight clubs engaged in the 2003-2004 Lebanese Basketball First Division season, six (75%) belong to the area of Beirut (Sagesse, Al Riyadi, Antranik, Champville, BlueStars, Café Najjar), one to the North of Lebanon (Meziara) and one to the Bekaa (East of Lebanon) region (Anibal Zahlé)¹⁷⁰. The lack of mass participation in sport is largely due to the lack of work undertaken by the sport authorities to develop sport in the different Lebanese regions. When a big part of the territory in the north, south, mountains, and Bekaa is not properly exploited, the

¹⁶⁷ See Joseph Sacre 1990 official report to the Lebanese Government [In French]

¹⁶⁸ Lebanese Olympic Committee, 2003 'list of the federations' document [In Arabic].

¹⁶⁹ See Lebanese Football Federation, 2003-2004 'list of the Lebanese 1st division participating teams' [In Arabic].

¹⁷⁰ See Lebanese Basketball Federation official website, 2003 1st division participating teams.

pool of talents will undoubtedly be reduced and the chances of improving sport results will therefore be reduced.

III-3- Difficulties met by the Lebanese elite athletes

In this part, we have tried to present the gist of the comments made by the persons who are the most concerned: the athletes. The main purpose behind this was to identify the difficulties that they are all facing in the practice of their sports¹⁷¹. Eight top Lebanese level athletes in eight different sports (skiing, squash, wushu, volley-ball, judo, swimming, football and tae kwon do) have been interviewed. The answer sought was to discern if the social status of these athletes in their respective sports was adequate for an improvement? From the eight athletes interviewed, three do not receive any financial support. The squash, swimming and tae kwon do athletes said that they pay everything themselves: training, games and travel expenses¹⁷². Three others say that they do not receive any money but get paid for all their travel expenses by the federation (judo, wushu and ski)¹⁷³. Cesar Keyrouz, member of the Lebanese skiing national team says that he gets a very small amount

¹⁷¹ See interviews of different Lebanese sport persons done from February to September 2003, in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

¹⁷² See interviews done with squash, swimming and taekwondo athletes, Joy Khoury, Sevak Demerdjian and Noel Mokhaiber from February to May 2003 in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

¹⁷³ See interviews with judo, wushu and ski athletes Wissam Abi Nader, Joe Kamel and Cesar Keyrouz from February to May 2003 in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon.

of sponsorship money for his equipment. The football and volleyball athletes interviewed receive a monthly income¹⁷⁴. But as the volleyball player, Elie Abi Chedid says: ‘Well, I cannot say that I am professional. I think we could say that I am semi-professional. Of course, I am paid, but I don’t have a working contract. There is no legal background protecting my contract. It is between me and the club.’ Moreover, the money that they earn (\$1000 a month for Elie Abi Chedid and \$1500 for the football player Hassan Ayoub) is not sufficient to permit them to be full-time athletes. They both have another profession: Elie Abi Chedid is a physical education university student and Hassan Ayoub is a bank employee. Also, as the contract signed by these athletes is officially an amateur one, there is no legal clause that would, professionally, protect these athletes. So, basically, the club’s president has the freedom to do anything with respect to these athletes. The situation of Lebanese football and volleyball players are between semi-professionalism and what the sport historians commonly call ‘shamateurism’.

Around the difficulties faced by these athletes, the opinions are unanimous: they all think that the biggest problem in their sport life is caused by the institutions that are supposed to support them: their federation or their government, which is mainly the same thing, considering that the federation represents the government. Some of the athletes talk about a ‘deficient management’ on the part of their federations, others about ‘lack of support’, ‘lack of professionalism’, others about ‘lack of money’ and even the word ‘corruption’ is mentioned. From the eight athletes

¹⁷⁴ See interviews with volleyball and football athletes Elie Abi Chedid and Hassan Ayoub done in March and May 2003, in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

interviewed, three have stated that war¹⁷⁵ and the lack of sport culture¹⁷⁶ are basically behind the problems that they are facing.

In France, the elite athletes are either professionals (for example in football¹⁷⁷) or semi-professionals. The latter means that they are backed by the government that plans their timetable in order to permit them to pursue their university studies¹⁷⁸ or to have a part-time job according to their needs. The Ministry of Youth and Sports also gives them a certain sum of pocket money that acts like a salary and allows them to dedicate themselves to their training full-time¹⁷⁹. The high ranking of France in the Olympic Games (ranked 6th in the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games¹⁸⁰), and the fact that they are among the top nations in teams sports (1998 Football World champion, two-time World champion in handball, two-time finalist in the Rugby Union World Cup and bronze medalist in the 2002 Volley-Ball World Championship) is largely due to the support given by the government to their athletes. After the financial disaster of the 1976 Montreal Olympic Games, the President of the IOC, Juan Antonio Samaranch, put all his effort to commercialise the games. Thus, the Los Angeles Olympic Games, in 1984, became the turning

¹⁷⁵ See interviews with ski, squash and football athletes Cesar Keyrouz, Joy Khoury and Hassan Ayoub done in February and May 2003, in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

¹⁷⁶ See interviews with ski, wushu and football athletes, Cesar Keyrouz, Joe Kamel and Hassan Ayoub done in February and May 2003 in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

¹⁷⁷ See French National Football League official website, charter [In French].

¹⁷⁸ See French Ministry of Youth and Sports official website, status of the elite athletes ('Statut des athlètes de haut-niveau'), France [In French].

¹⁷⁹ See Jerome Thomas November 2001 interview to the daily sport newspaper 'L'Equipe'. In this interview, Jérôme Thomas, member of the French Olympic boxing team, mentioned that he receives from the Ministry of Youth and Sports a purse of 2000\$ a month [In French].

¹⁸⁰ See International Olympic Committee official website, Sydney 2000 Olympics medal table.

point in the professionalisation of the Olympics¹⁸¹. Amateurism declined, and from then on it became almost impossible to achieve a certain success in any sport without having fully dedicated athletes. As for the Lebanese top-athletes, most of whom are amateurs - few are semi-professionals who are unofficially paid - it seems difficult for them to achieve international success in their respective sport. The question needed probably to be asked is: Why are these athletes not professional? Why don't they have the facilities and the appropriate conditions that would allow them to train, full-time, for their sports? According to them, the main problems they face in the practice of their sports are mainly the lack of support and the deficient management of the sporting authorities. They might be right with their criticism of the national sport bodies, but are the latter really responsible for the lack of resources necessary to make their athletes full fledged professionals?

In modern sport, they are mainly two systems that constitute the base to professional athletes:

- Government funding mainly used in state-interventionist countries like France¹⁸².
- Private or sponsors' funding mainly present in the ultra-liberal countries like the United States of America¹⁸³.

In Lebanon, it is very difficult to apply any of the aforementioned systems. It is said that the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports has at its disposal only 0.4%

¹⁸¹ See Patrick Bouchet and Mohammad Kaach article, 'Existe-t-il un « modèle sportif » dans les pays africains francophones ?' STAPS revue N.65 [In French].

¹⁸² See French Ministry of Youth and Sports official website, 2005 budget [In French].

¹⁸³ See Fox, Stephen (1998). *Big Leagues: Professional Baseball, Football, And Basketball In National Memory*. (University of Nebraska Press) pp.417-449.

of the Lebanese Government's budget¹⁸⁴. This money is barely sufficient for the internal functioning of the Ministry itself. With this situation, the hypothesis of athletes backed by the government will have to be dismissed. Concerning private funding, sponsors usually intervene in the sporting movement when they see that there is some profit to be made of. So, how will a private body invest in sports where there is a small fan base and a very little television exposure¹⁸⁵? Once again, the main reason behind the lack of resources to back the Lebanese elite athletes is the small size of the country's sport movement. But are the sport authorities working sufficiently to compensate for this lack of resources? Are they contributing to enrolling youth into their sport programs, or are they there to satisfy political interests?

III-4- Corruption and religious division of Lebanese sport

¹⁸⁴ See report done in the year 2005 under the protocol of the cooperation between the French Embassy and the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports written by Henri-Pierre Gazzeri et Jean-François Isnard concerning the valuation mission for the implementation of coaching programmes [In French].

¹⁸⁵ See Lebanese Broadcasting Company International (LBCI) official website, 2004 Lebanese Broadcasting Company Lebanese sport event ratings. Only some basketball's very important games reach a visible television audience.

It is commonly said that corruption and religious division are the worst cancers of Lebanon. We will try to see, in the following paragraphs, how strong the impact of these problems on the Lebanese sport is¹⁸⁶.

From 1975 to 1990, Lebanese sport infrastructure has been completely destroyed by the civil war. During that time, we could not even talk about corruption considering the much larger problems that occurred and that had completely decimated the Lebanese sport movement. However, the Lebanese sport was reinstated towards the end of 1990, at the conclusion of the last Lebanese civil war. As is the case in any country coming out of war, the priority is given to the rebuilding of the city, the rehabilitation of electricity, water, phones, and everything that constitutes the vital basis to secure a semblance of a 'normal life'. Setting an adequate sport programme was the furthest thing from the people's and the government's preoccupations. During the first years of the Lebanese post-war

¹⁸⁶ This part has been written thanks to the contribution of one of the most prominent Lebanese sport administrative of the post-Lebanese war period, M. Jihad Salame. In 1994, he was behind the publication of the first official catalogue explaining the rules and regulations of the Lebanese sport associations and federations. Due to his experience in the organization of sport events in Mont-La-Salle, M. Salame was appointed in the organizing committee of the major sport events of the Lebanese Post-War period: 1997 Arab Games in Beirut, 1998 Olympic Week, 2000 Asian Football Cup. From 1999 to 2001, he has successfully attended the National Director course organized by the International Olympic Committee. From 1995 to 2001, he was a television sport presenter for the Lebanese State Television Channel. This job permitted him to highlight the different sporting events and more importantly to undertake what he considers the biggest task of his sport career: Fighting the corruption in the Lebanese sports. According to him, the corruption found within the sport authorities is one of the worst obstacles that Lebanese sport has to face in order to develop. Not only the money assigned to Lebanese sport is insufficient but it also has to be embezzled by political persons which primary interest is to put a 'political hand' on sport and to profit from different advantages offered upon attaining a federation member status. All the documents that he has produced and collected to fight the corruption found in the Lebanese sport institutions have been gathered in a file that he has started in the end of 2004, and that he submitted, as a National Course Director in 2005 to the International Olympic Committee in Lausanne.

period, the Lebanese sports, as such, were more than corrupted, they were ‘held’, monopolised, by 4 or 5 persons, who decided on anything to do in the different sport institutions. And as any file in the Lebanese Government, sports were under the sole authority of a group of individuals who controlled everything at that time. In 1994, a group of sport journalists and federations members started what was called the ‘Lebanese sport revolution’; these people wanted to change and improve the status of the Lebanese sports by creating a proper infrastructure and fighting the corruption. With the creation of the Ministry of Youth and Sports catalogue for associations, the rules and regulations indispensable to the creation of clubs and federations were established. By this move, this small group of people wanted to prevent the creation of all the virtual clubs and federations. In 1995, they fought their first fight to dethrone the people who monopolise the Lebanese Horse-Riding federation. In 1996, it was the turn of the basketball federation. In 1997, it was the Lebanese Olympic Committee’s battles. 15 other federations were the arenas of this fight against corruption.

This intense ‘clean hands’ programme’s success was not always achieved; actually, it was achieved in 60% of the cases. More than the half of the 34 federations have improved, 10 to 15% of them have slightly improved, and the 25% others have not improved at all. Concerning the Olympic Solidarity funding, the situation improved a little bit from 1998 to 2002, where only 50% of the money (instead of all of it) ‘disappeared’. Actually, fighting the corruption was not a trend or a ‘rule’ imposed by anyone; stopping the corruption depended on how much the federation heads were willing to ‘clean’ the associations leading their sports.

Actually, there are 2 kinds of corruption that bedevils Lebanese sport:

- **The financial corruption:** money, supposed to support the different sport programmes, disappears from the sport authorities' boxes. For example, before 1998, the Olympic Solidarity Programme used to regularly send funds to the Lebanese Olympic Committee; but a look at the financial accounts of the Lebanese Olympic Committee, no amount of money was stated as being received.

The same thing happened between the Lebanese Olympic Committee and the other federations. The financial accounts between them were always contradictory. The LOC claims to send funds to the federation, and the federation says that it did not receive anything. In both cases, one of the sides is hiding the truth. To avoid this problem, we need to control and have transparency, for a lack of transparency in dealings is the main contributor to the financial corruption.

- **The administrative corruption:** the pressure put, through the media, by the 'sport revolution' group has to a certain extent countered the financial corruption in the Lebanese sports. The different federations' members are now more careful and try to avoid a bad reputation with the media. But what remains even more difficult to change is the now 'legendary' administrative corruption of sport in Lebanon. In fact, all the governmental institutions in the country are subject to the same rule: these institutions are likened to a cake that every religious community or political party (which is almost the same in Lebanon considering that political parties consist mainly of one religious group, p.68) tries to secure a portion of, and which it considers adequate to its size. Therefore, many persons were 'assigned'/'parachuted' to a certain position inside a federation only because these

people represent or are advocate of a certain a political party. Consequently, according to M.Salame, 90% of the people working at a sport federation are not the ‘right persons in the right places’, but are the result of the ‘obscure arrangements’ made by the different politicians. As such, the Lebanese sport authorities would be systematically ‘crowded’ with incompetent people. It is therefore not surprising to hear from the different athletes the expressions mentioned above: ‘Deficient management’, ‘lack of support’, ‘lack of professionalism’ and ‘corruption’¹⁸⁷.

The impact of the political and religious opposition on the Lebanese sports is the most problematic issue and one of the main factors preventing a proper development of Lebanese sport. After the civil war in 1990, the major role of the Lebanese Government, in addition to the reconstruction of the country, was to control and to enforce an ‘obligatory peace’ between the different communities and political groups that have fought each other during 15 years. Hence, talking about the former religious or political divisions of the country remained for more that 10 years after the end of the war, a taboo subject. The last 2 battles in the Lebanese war (between 1988 and 1990) are not even mentioned in any school history book¹⁸⁸.

Therefore, it was difficult to obtain information about the religious or political opposition of that period through interviews. For example, a question to a federation responsible, who represents the Ministry of Youth and Sports and hence

¹⁸⁷ See interviews with different Lebanese sport athletes from February to September 2003, in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

¹⁸⁸ Oral interview with Lebanese Ministry of Education advisor Najwa Fuleihan, done in February 2008.

the Lebanese Government was ‘What is the percentage of **Muslims Sunnites** (or **Muslims Shiites**, or **Christians Maronites** or **Druzes**) in different sport federations?’ seems difficult to ask. However, the answer could be partially gleaned by taking, as reference, a sociology Master¹⁸⁹ thesis which showed the opposition between **Muslims Sunnites** and **Christians Maronites** fans in basketball. Indeed, the most important and intense derby in the country is the one opposing the best two basketball teams in Lebanon, Sagesse (a **Christian Maronite** club) to Riyadiah (a **Muslim Sunnite** club). Based on one of the author’s statistics inferred from the result concluded from a questionnaire that she had distributed, it was shown that the fans of each side like their club because the latter represents their community. She also stated that the club that Sagesse fans dislike the most is Riyadiah. The same thing goes the other way¹⁹⁰. In an interview conducted with a football elite athlete¹⁹¹, he stated that the idea that we got concerning the federation positions is that the members are nominated according to their political loyalties. He said: ‘Football is politicised. It reflects the country. The federations are made to satisfy a certain political party. Even though you still have persons working with integrity, but these persons are very rare. You have much more persons that have political influence.’ Indeed, one of the examples of the religious and political disparity is found in the Lebanese Football First Division. Here is the list of the clubs participating in the season 2003-2004¹⁹²:

¹⁸⁹ See St.Joseph University Master Thesis in sociology, Zeina Tohme Adaime, ‘Analysis of a success: Lebanese basketball’ (2002) [In French].

¹⁹⁰ See Leah Boukhater article, ‘Basket au Liban’, ‘Outre-Terre. Revue française de géopolitique’, n° 8, pp. 129-130 [In French].

¹⁹¹ See interview with football athlete Hassan Ayoub in May 2003, in Beirut, Lebanon.

¹⁹² See Lebanese Football Federation 2003-2004 ‘list of the Lebanese 1st division participating teams’ [In Arabic].

- Nijmeh (which means Star in English): it is the most famous football club in Lebanon. It belongs to Bahak el Hariri, a **Muslim Sunni** billionaire. Now, a big part of the administration is run by **Muslim Shiite**.
- Al Ahed: this club, **Muslim Shiite**, has very strong links with the political party 'Hezbollah'.
- Tadamon Tyr: this club is very important to the **Muslim Shiite** community of South Lebanon. It is strongly linked to the resistance against Israel in the South of Lebanon. In Arabic, 'Tadamon' means solidarity.
- Chabab El Sahel: this club belongs to one of the **Muslim** communities in Beirut.
- Olympic Beirut: a new club founded 2 years ago by a **Sunni** Billionaire who has the intention to make it one of the most important clubs in the Middle East.
- Al Ansar: holder of a record in the Guinness book after winning 11 national titles in a row, this club belongs to the **Muslim Sunni** community of Beirut. It is considered to be the 'brother' of 'Riyadiah', the basketball Sunnite club. Al Ansar is traditionally opposed to Nijmeh in football. Some years ago, the games these two clubs played were done so to no¹⁹³. Al Ansar- Nijmeh is the strongest and most important derby in Beirut and in Lebanon. If basketball is the arena for the opposition between the Muslims Sunni and the Christians Maronites, football is the Muslims Shiite and the Muslims Sunni's arena.
- Homentmen: one of the two most important Armenian football clubs in Lebanon. It belongs to the **Armenian** political party, Tashnak. It is important to note that Homentmen Beirut is part one of the chain of clubs representing the international Armenian community.
- Homenmen: traditionally opposed to Homentmen, this club represents the **Armenian** political party of Henschag.

¹⁹³ See 'L'Orient-Le-Jour' Newspapers 1999 archives [In French].

- Al Mabarra: Al Mabarra is for the Muslim Shiite community almost what Sagesse is for the Christian Maronite. Al Mabarra is a **Shiite** institution that regroups schools and football clubs. Like Sagesse, there is a strong link between the school and the sport club.
- Al Safa: with Akhaa Ahly Aley (the latter came back to the Lebanese football 1st division in the season 2004-2005), these clubs are the two most important in the **Druze** community.
- Sagesse: much more important in basketball, this club is however one of the only two Christians Maronite clubs in the Lebanese Football First Division. Sagesse acts like a real **Maronite** super institution. It is directly linked to the Maronite Patriarch of Beirut. It regroups several schools, a university and a sport club. It is not surprising that the success of Sagesse in basketball has created such an important fan base within the Maronite community.
- Salam Zgharta: the only club representing the north of Lebanon. This club, a **Maronite** club, represents the city of Zgharta, where some notorious families (i.e. President Franjeh, late President Moawad) had always an important role in the history of the country's politics.

An interview conducted with a squash coach in a club called 'The Escape', showed that the federations' positions are given to maintain a balance between the religious communities¹⁹⁴. He said that: 'All the federations are constituted according to confessional communities. Some federations are for the Maronites, others for the Sunnites, and yet other for the Shiites....'. This statement may appear to be a simplistic and unrealistic one, but we have tried to verify this fact by taking the

¹⁹⁴ See the interview conducted with the person in charge of squash in 'The escape' club Georges El-Hajj, in February 2003 in Beirut, Lebanon.

names of the presidents and the general secretaries (these two positions have been chosen because they are considered to be the most important positions inside a federation) of each of the federations, chosen from a list given by the Lebanese Olympic Committee in the end of the year 2003¹⁹⁵. To identify their religion, an official catalogue¹⁹⁶ that mentions the family names in the different villages and towns has been taken as a reference. However, this catalogue did not always give the exact community to whom the person belongs, but we knew if he was a Moslem or Christian.

Out of the 34 federations cited above, 5 have a (president-general secretary) Christian-Moslem combination, 1 Christian-Druze combination and 1 Moslem-Druze combination. The other 27 federations have a president and a general secretary from the same main religious community. 16 federations are ‘run’ by Christians, 11 by Moslems. The results show that the Lebanese sport institutions hardly bring the different communities together. When some sports are played by a certain religious community and not by the other, Lebanese citizens will have a decreased sense of national identity or belonging.

Moreover, from a technical point of view, we will have a smaller base of persons practising sport. Fewer persons playing sport will give a smaller pool of talents and consequently less chance of achieving promising regional and international sport results. From a marketing point of view, a small number of amateur athletes will decrease the number of potential sport spectators and will consequently decrease

¹⁹⁵ See Table 10 of the Appendix.

¹⁹⁶ See Lebanese families, villages and towns 2004 catalogue [In Arabic].

the media attention and the sponsorship for different sports. Also, as we have said before, lack of marketing and sport results will create a vicious circle tending to decrease the importance that sport can have in the country¹⁹⁷.

Corruption, religious division within the different Lebanese sport institutions and the lack of financial and human resources are the main factors that hinder its development. Has also the last war (1975-1990) really affected the improvement of the Lebanese sport movement?

III-5- Impact of the previous war

Lebanon has undergone a severe attack during the vicious war that extended from 1975 to 1990. During this decade and a half, the sport movement was almost nil in Lebanon¹⁹⁸. Even though many suggest that the effect of the war has receded, but others believe that its repercussions are still felt¹⁹⁹. War in Lebanon has occurred in a period where international sport has known a determinant expansion. The years around 1984 have been a springboard in the development of professional sport²⁰⁰. In 1976, television's income from the Montreal Olympic Games was about \$32

¹⁹⁷ See Table 11 of the Appendix.

¹⁹⁸ See Joseph Sacre 1990 official report to the Lebanese Government [In French].

¹⁹⁹ See interview done with Joseph Moawad, the General Director of the Lebanese Football Federation, in September 2003, in Beirut, Lebanon: 'I don't want to put it on the previous war because it is a way beyond us, as far as I am concerned'.

²⁰⁰ See Patrick Bouchet and Mohammad Kaach article, 'Existe-t-il un « modèle sportif » dans les pays africains francophones ?' STAPS revue N.65 [In French].

million. The coverage of the Moscow 1980 Olympic Games increased this income to \$101 million; in Los Angeles, 1984, to \$207 million; in Seoul, 1988, to \$403 million; in Barcelona, 1992, to \$636 million and in Atlanta in 1996, it reached the number of \$895 million. This huge amount of money, resulted from the commercialisation of the Olympics has enhanced the involvement, and therefore the budget, of the different Ministries of Youth and Sports, and of the national Olympic committees. The elite athletes, securing a part of this huge sum of money, could finally dedicate themselves totally to sport, which consequently became their profession. While all the developed countries were developing their sport infrastructure, civil and external wars were damaging our country, stopping any developments and organisation of any stable sport activity. This fact was revealed by Walid Younes (Lebanese Volleyball Federation General Secretary) when interviewed²⁰¹: ‘The war had a disastrous impact on us. Before the war, Lebanon, beside Tunisia and Egypt, was considered to be one of the best countries in volleyball. When the war broke out, the state of the Lebanese sports declined, when that of the other developing countries was Lebanon was going up; that is why now we are not a dominant country at the Arab scale.’

So, if Lebanon has such backwardness in the world sport rankings, it is not only due to the 15 years of war where sport has almost stopped. It is also because, during these 15 years (1975 to 1990), international sport has developed so much that the gap is so difficult to cover now. If such a war had happened before, for example between 1960 and 1975, maybe it would not have been so difficult for

²⁰¹ See interview done with the Lebanese Volleyball Federation General Secretary Walid Younes in June 2003, in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

Lebanon to catch up with the high standards of sport that other nations have achieved.

After seeing the difficulties that Lebanese sport is facing, we will, in the next chapter, analyse the elements behind the Lebanese post-war successes and then, in the final chapter propose a plan for development.

Chapter IV- Analysis of the

Lebanese post-war sport

successes

To propose perspectives for development, we should first look at the sports that have achieved a relative degree of success from 1990 to 2004. Maybe then, we could use what have ‘worked’ in certain sports and apply it in the others. We will not talk about the period from 1975 to 1990, because the war made impossible to enforce the elaboration of any sport policy, and the only Olympic medal won in 1980 Moscow games by Hassan Bchara was the fruit of individual talent, dedication and hard-work²⁰². To measure a sport success that occurred between 1990 and 2004, we will again take into consideration the 3 factors that constitute it:

- The size of the sport movement, consisting of the licensees participating.
- The fan base drawn by this movement.
- The international results obtained by its athletes.

²⁰² See Sacre Joseph, *Le Sport Au Liban*, (Beirut, Joseph Reaydé Edition, 1980) p.115-123 [In French].

The number of licensees and the fan base imply, in social terms, the size of the sport community; and in economical terms, the size of the sport industry and market. The international results obtained by the athletes will give a measure of the game's standards. As the Lebanese sport spiral of difficulties table²⁰³ has shown us, there is a very strong correlation between those three factors: poor sport results and standards will draw a small fan base, decrease the number of competitors and the pool of talent. And the small size of the latter will systematically affect the sport standards. This vicious circle has been the case of almost all of the sports in Lebanon. In this first part of this chapter, we will see which sports have been able to resist this barrage of difficulties. The variable that will be first taken into consideration is the international results obtained by the athletes of these sports. Once we have it, we will see if a fan base and an increase in these sports movement would have resulted in these successes. Then, in case these sports have really achieved a significant success, we will analyse which are the elements of sport policy that were behind this success.

We will first define the core criterion vital for Lebanon to attain success in the sport world. Considering the sport characteristics of Lebanon, we will consider a 'legitimate' international success a qualification for the Olympics, a major sport world championship (a sport like basketball, football or volleyball, where an appearance in the final stage requires several successive qualifying rounds) or a medal in a non- Olympic minor sport-world championship (a sport like wushu or amateur bodybuilding where there is still, relatively to the major sports, a small

²⁰³ See Table 8 of the Appendix

number of participants, none or very low financial rewards and where there are no qualification rounds to take part in the event).

IV-1- What was behind the few Lebanese Olympic successes from 1990 to 2004?

The qualifications earned by Lebanon in the Olympics will constitute the first part of our analysis. This is a reminder of the athletes who have been able to qualify²⁰⁴:

- Jean-Claude Rabbath got the minima to qualify in the men high-jump event in the 2000 Sydney and 2004 Athens Olympic Games. He is the only Lebanese athlete in the sport of athletics of the post-war period that have been able to qualify to the Olympics. His results in the men high-jump event of the Lebanese Athletics Championship has always been much higher than his competitors. His qualification to the Olympics is not due to the standards of athletics in Lebanon. Rabbath has passed most of his youth practising basketball. The Lebanese Athletics Federation has occasionally given him some financial support, indispensable to his training, but his results were not the fruit of a planned sport policy²⁰⁵. Actually, this federation does not have a sufficient budget and infrastructure to implement a long-

²⁰⁴ See '*L'Orient Le Jour*' September 2000, February 2002 and August 2004 archives [In French]

²⁰⁵ Oral interview with Jean-Claude Rabbath, Lebanese elite Athletics athlete, done in March 2003.

term strategy necessary to graduate athletes able to compete at the international stage²⁰⁶. The main reasons behind Rabbath's qualification to the Olympics are his natural talent, effort and dedication.

- Sherine Njeim got the minima to qualify for the women skiing event in the 2002 Salt-Lake City Olympic Games. Born in 1984 to a wealthy family, Sherine has, since her early childhood, been considered as a promising ski talent. Thanks to her parents' 'sponsorship', she was able to travel, in the beginning of 2000 to the US where she lives and trains in the Rowmark Ski Academy, in Salt Lake City. Sherine Njeim's mother has protested several times against the lack of sufficient support from the Lebanese Government and the Lebanese Skiing Federation²⁰⁷, stating that she was 'tired' of investing her own money to allow her daughter to represent Lebanon; and ending with such a little help and recognition from the government. On the other hand, even if the budget invested by the Lebanese sport authorities is not comparable to the one invested by the top skiing countries, Njeim was the only skier to receive money from the different Lebanese sport authorities²⁰⁸. In the course of her preparation for the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympic, the Lebanese Skiing Federation, the Lebanese Olympic Committee and the Ministry of Youth and Sports invested most of their budget for skiing on Sherine Njeim. 'Almost' nothing was given to the other members of the national team and to the youth's development. Sherine Njeim's success is an exceptional case of a mixture of wealthy parents' sponsorship, natural talent and support from the different

²⁰⁶ See interview with the Lebanese Athletics Federation General Secretary Raymond Behlok, May 2003, Beirut, Lebanon.

²⁰⁷ See '*Al-Balad*' newspaper 2004 archives [In Arabic].

²⁰⁸ See interview with ski athlete Cesar Keyrouz done in February 2003, in Beirut suburbs, Lebanon.

Lebanese sport organisation. It is not the fruit of a planned sport policy, and did not have any impact on mass skiing participation. This expensive sport²⁰⁹, remains exclusively for the middle-class; and the ‘last-minute’ support from the Lebanese sport institutions²¹⁰ will not produce regular successful international results, mass participation and fan base.

- Joe Salem got the minima to qualify for a men-shooting event in the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games. Shooting is a very expensive sport: for a daily practice a year around, the material costs several thousands of dollars. Actually, Joe Salem has criticized the different authorities and sport authorities for their lack of support²¹¹. If he was not able to invest on his own training, he would have never been able to qualify for the Olympics. Joe Salem’s success is also an exceptional case of wealth, effort and natural talent, and is not the result of the Lebanese Shooting Federation sport policy that was not able to form a pool of athletes capable to qualify regularly to the Olympics, to increase this sport mass participation and consequently to build a fan base.

- Nicki Fuerstauer got the minima to qualify for the men skiing event in the 2002 Salt-Lake City Olympic Games. He is an Austrian elite skier, who, in order to have a sponsor, had to compete in the international level. His performance was not up to the standards that of the Austrian skiing national team. Therefore, he looked for a

²⁰⁹ See Lebanese 2004 tourist guide.

²¹⁰ The money was sent to Sherine in her last year of preparation to the Olympics, where she had to compete against athletes having decades of scientific training, complex scouting and high-level competitions. To make things worse, Njeim was injured.

²¹¹ See ‘*Al-Nahar*’ newspaper 2000 archives [In Arabic].

minor country that he could represent in continental and international competitions²¹². The Lebanese Skiing Federation saw an opportunity to appear on the world skiing ‘map’; and with the help of the government, represented by the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports, offered to Fuerstauer the Lebanese passport. Fuerstauer qualified for the 2002 Olympic Games and gave Lebanon its first Winter Asian Games gold medal in 2003 in Aomori, Japan. He then got his sponsorship and went back home to Austria. This short-term strategy, based on the will of the Lebanese sport authorities to have a ‘fast’ and ‘easy’ success, could hardly bring any development to the sport of skiing in Lebanon. Bringing a foreigner who does not have any natural and cultural link to the country will not give any sense of identity to all those interested in Lebanese skiing. The impact on the sport standards is in fact minimal since this world-class athlete would spend a little time in Lebanon; consequently, not offering to the country’s elite skiers the opportunity to mingle and profit from his experience.

The concept of naturalisation of top international athletes to win international sport successes has often been used by the Arab countries, especially the wealthy ones like Qatar and Bahrein²¹³. Even if Lebanon has used this process in several sports (skiing, basketball²¹⁴ and football²¹⁵), its budget is much lower than the one of the two countries mentioned above, so it could not easily naturalise athletes and offer them the opportunity to live as professional sportsmen in Lebanon. What Lebanon did more often was to try to benefit from the very large Lebanese Diaspora it has in

²¹² Oral interview with ski athlete Cesar Keyrouz done in February 2003.

²¹³ See International Olympic Committee official website, Qatar and Bahrein Athens 2004 Olympic delegations.

²¹⁴ See Lebanese Basketball Federation official website, 2002 national team roster archives.

²¹⁵ See ‘*Al-Nahar*’ Newspaper 2000 archives, Lebanese football 2000 national team roster [In Arabic].

the different regions of the world. The next part of this chapter will expound on the Lebanese Diaspora, and the opportunities it can offer to help in the development of the Lebanese sports.

IV-2- The impact of the Lebanese Diaspora on the Lebanese sports

Lebanese emigration is a phenomenon that goes way back in history, having its roots in the Phoenician times; it has been on the rise till the 21st century²¹⁶. Its causes are familial, social, political and economical. It is estimated that, if these emigrants were added to those born abroad of Lebanese origin, the number of the Lebanese Diaspora might exceed 10 million. Suffice to say that the emigration of the Lebanese during the late nineteenth century; specifically after the civil war of 1860 has increased to astounding levels. Egypt was among the first destinations of the emigrants reached, followed by France, the United States, Australia and Brazil (a very important flow has emigrated to Latin America in the 19th century). The two world wars, and most importantly, the 1975 conflict, have contributed to the rise in the number of emigrants. Some sources have estimated the number of emigrants since 1975 up until 1990 to be about 900000 persons. Between 1975 and 1990, the United States of America, Canada and Australia were the main destinations of Lebanese emigrants, followed by Europe (France, Germany, Britain,

²¹⁶ See international magazine 'Information International', November 2001.

Sweden, Denmark, Italy, Spain). The return of peace and stability in 1992, and the launching of the reconstruction process were not sufficient to put a hold on or minimise emigration, which had expanded to include new social and religious categories.

Statistics show that 30% of the emigrates are Maronites, 6.6% Orthodox, 5.1% Catholics, 4.6% Armenians, 30.4% Shiites, 18.3% Sunni and 5.3% are Druzes. While in the past the majority of those who emigrated were Christian, non-Christians (Shiite and Sunni Muslims and Druze) have in the past 10 years outnumbered Christian emigrants. The Christians and especially Maronites preferred to immigrate to Europe, North and South America; while the Shiites usually emigrated to Africa. Australia is a destination where there are Lebanese from very different communities (Sunnites, Shiites, Maronites.)

Since the end of the war, many Lebanese from the foreign countries achieved an international sport success. The idea is simple: if there are about 10 million Lebanese (or people having Lebanese origins) living all over the world, it is then more than likely to find athletes that have developed their talent in a certain game outside Lebanon (North America, Canada, Australia and Europe); bring them back and make them contribute to the international sport success of the country. In football, in the 2000 Asian Cup, 5 of the Lebanese players were Brazilian having Lebanese origins: Jadir Morgenstern, Newton De Oliveira, Gilberto Dos Santos, Marcilio Silva, Luis Fernandes. For the season 2003-2004, the central defender of the Lebanese national team is an Australian of Lebanese origin: Badawi Farah²¹⁷.

²¹⁷ See Lebanese Football Federation 2003-2004 Lebanese national team archives [In Arabic].

The Lebanese Basketball Federation has launched a campaign calling any player of Lebanese origin to come and play for the national team²¹⁸. Many elite players who play for the Lebanese basketball national team or for a first division club come from foreign countries: Paul Khoury (Tonga), Charbel Chibani (Canada), Charles Bardawil (Canada), Marwan Ali Ahmad (France), Rony Seikaly (former NBA player), Sabah Khoury (United States of America), Hani El Zakhem (United States of America), Brian Bechara (United States of America). Actually, these athletes have strongly contributed to Lebanon's international basketball success. In tennis, the two best Lebanese players, Patrick Checric and Karim Aleyli live in the United States of America where they pursue their education besides training for their sport. They come to Lebanon mainly to play the Davis Cup²¹⁹, and to avoid a relegation of the country to a lower International Tennis Federation ranking²²⁰.

The best example of the use of the Lebanese international community is to be found in the sport of rugby league²²¹. In 1997, a group of professional Australian rugby league players of Lebanese origins from inner-city Sydney formed a team called 'The Cedars' (a symbolic reference to the tree of Lebanon, the one drawn on the country's flag), and participated in the World Rugby League Sevens tournament under the name 'Lebanon'. This group of Australian-Lebanese athletes and managers showed their intention to represent Lebanon in the 2000 Rugby League World Cup. The Rugby League International Federation accepted under only condition: that they would develop a domestic league in Lebanon. After

²¹⁸ See Lebanese Basketball Federation official website, 2002 national team roster archives.

²¹⁹ Oral interview done in January 2008, with Marc Kesrwan, the Captain of the Lebanese Davis Cup team.

²²⁰ See International Tennis Federation official website, Davis Cup 2004 ranking.

²²¹ See Official website of the Lebanese Rugby League Federation.

succeeding in qualifying against Japan, Morocco, USA and Italy, the ‘Cedars’ became the first sport team from Lebanon to participate in a World Cup’s final stage. In 2002, with the collaboration of the Rugby League International Federation, they have sent a former semi-professional Rugby League player, Danny Kazandjian, a British of Lebanese origin, to develop the game in Lebanon. Without a massive investment, and knowing that good facilities will mainly be found in the universities, he organised a local championship among 4 of them: AUB (American University of Beirut), UOB (the University of Balamand), LAU (Lebanese American University) and NDU (Notre-Dame University). The best players from these universities were chosen to become members in the ‘Cedars’, and consequently, participate in the Rugby League Mediterranean Cup. Moreover, the Lebanese Rugby League Foundation created the ‘Liban Espoir’, a domestic representative team, which draws on players only from the local championship. This team gives the Lebanese-born rugby league players a chance to earn an international experience, and on a long-term basis, with the improvement of the domestic league, to have the largest number possible of local players that will represent Lebanon’s first team in the future Rugby League world cups²²².

Three of the four sports mentioned above undoubtedly took advantage of the Lebanese Diaspora to promote their international sport results in basketball, tennis and rugby league. In football, however, this did not have the positive impact as expected. The players brought from abroad did not serve the national team in the expected way, and Lebanon was eliminated in the first round of the 2000 AFC

²²² Oral interview with Danny Kazandjian, the President of the Lebanese Rugby League’s Foundation, done in September 2003.

(Asian Football Confederation) Cup²²³ having not won any single game. Though those players were later hired by the different Lebanese 1st division clubs, they were unable to introduce any improvement to the game's standards²²⁴. However, in basketball, tennis and rugby league international competitions, those athletes were assets. Thus, the use of the Lebanese Diaspora can offer a similar 'bonus' as that offered by the naturalization of foreign players, to the sport standards in the country, considering that those immigrants or son of immigrants had honed their talents in 'advanced' nations in the field of sports. Their impact is even better because most of the Lebanese people can identify with them. And, from a practical point of view, this procedure is much simpler than the naturalisation process which, in the last couple of years, was rendered difficult by the strict rules imposed by the international federations and the IOC (International Olympic Committee)²²⁵. The conditions to implement the 'Lebanese Diaspora sport policy' are also much more facilitated by the fact that most of these athletes still have close relatives and places of residence in Lebanon, thus saving a lot of money for the federations that would follow this strategy.

However, most of these athletes are semi or full professionals in the countries from which they migrated. Bringing them back home will have to be done with the consideration of their status. If the different Lebanese federations want to really benefit from these athletes, and make them mix with the local players and

²²³ See Asian Football Confederation official website 2000 Asian Football Championship archives.

²²⁴ Oral interview with Jirayr Habibian, member of the Lebanese Football Federation, done in May 2003.

²²⁵ See International Olympic Committee official website rules for the naturalisation of players. These rules were implemented in 2001 to thwart the abuse of massive naturalisation of players to win gold medal in the Olympic Games (i.e. Qatar, Bahrein).

accordingly improve the domestic championships; standards, the fan base, youth development and the mass participation, the federations must entice them conditions to remain in Lebanon. This cannot be done without offering them a monthly salary, higher than the one they would receive in the country where they are pursuing their carrier. Theoretically, Lebanon can immensely profit in terms of sport results from its Diaspora, because the latter consist of players, coaches and administrators exercising in the top world leagues (United States of America National Football League, international professional boxing organisations, United States of America Major League Baseball, United States of America National Collegiate Athletic Association, Australian National Rugby League, Brazilian Football First Division League....)²²⁶. The better the results the Lebanese different organisations want to achieve, the more they have to go up in the pyramid and ‘hire’ some of these sportsmen. In reality, this strategy is much more difficult to apply. If a Lebanese federation wants to bring home an athlete from a NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) or of any international level, in order to a shot at qualifying for the Olympics, or to add an advantage to a team sport national squad, they would have to pay out a monthly wage exceeding at least \$5000 a month²²⁷. Annually, this will represent more than \$60000 a month. This sum of money is much higher than the budget the different federations have combined at their disposal²²⁸. If some of these federations will, despite all their difficulties, opt for this strategy and look for a private sponsor to gather so much money and invest it on one single athlete (who risks an injury and might often prefer to go back to his country of immigration where he sees much more

²²⁶ See Lebanese Emigration Research Centre 2004 statistics.

²²⁷ Oral interview with Marc Kesrwani, Captain of the Lebanese Davis Cup team, done in January 2008.

²²⁸ See interviews conducted with different Lebanese heads of federations, from February to September 2003, in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

advantages in the term of preparation and competition standards), they will surely do it at the expense of their grass roots programme, indispensable for the functioning of any sport system. The use of the Lebanese Diaspora to improve the sport results of the country must be done according to a studied plan taking into consideration long-term results targeting a durable development of the other elements of sport success (mass participation, fan base, youth development, standards of the local championship), but that which is not only oriented to the achievements by a quick result without any follow-up.

The sports able to use efficiently this Lebanese Diaspora are the ‘largest’ ones, those involving the confrontation of teams representing different cities, regions or communities, mainly team sports. Among the country’s three largest team sport federations²²⁹: basketball, volleyball and football, basketball was the one which incorporated, in the best way, these athletes from the Lebanese Diaspora. Actually, as we said before (p.80) basketball was the most successful sport of the post-war period. The import of players from the Lebanese Diaspora was just one of the elements contributing to this success. The next part of this chapter will actually propose a re-analysis of the late-90’s basketball booming phase and will examine the possibility of whether if the basketball model is applicable to the other Lebanese sports.

²²⁹ See interview with the Lebanese Volleyball Federation General Secretary Wallid Younes done in June 2003 in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon.

IV-3- Is basketball the best model to follow in order to develop the Lebanese sports?

As we said before (p.80), basketball had all the ingredients of a sport success: Private individual investment, sponsorship, import of foreign players, media coverage, and organisation of efficient youth programme, naturalisation of key foreign players and bringing in of high-level players from the Lebanese Diaspora. Basketball became the number one Lebanese sport in terms of mass participation, fan base and sport results. Many modern sport management methods have been used to develop the Lebanese basketball marketability and can be considered as exploits in terms of sport strategy for a developing country lacking experience in terms of organisation of sport events. For the season 2003-2004, the number of teams in the Lebanese Basketball 1st division has decreased from 12 to 8²³⁰. The purpose of this measure was to increase the TV rights' shares for each club, so as to enable these clubs to have a higher budget possible in order to improve their teams and subsequently improve the general game's standards. During the same season, a team called 'Café Najjar' was newly promoted to the Lebanese Basketball 1st division. 'Café Najjar' is one of the largest Lebanese coffee companies that acclaimed, through the venue of basketball, a massive advertisement campaign²³¹. It considered that it is much more profitable for a company to have a team holding its name and representing the company than to undertake the massive sponsorship of another club. It is a sport management practise used by many clubs in the Italian

²³⁰ See Lebanese Basketball Federation official website, 2003-2004 list of the 1st division participating teams.

²³¹ Oral interview with Madeleine Seba, LBCI employee, done in January 2007.

Basketball 1st Division (Benetton Treviso, Air Avellino, Skipper Bologna, Coop Nordeste Trieste²³²), and in the Spanish Futsal 1st division (Boomerang Interviu, El Pozo Murcia Turistica, Gervasport Boadilla²³³). The introduction of squads like ‘Café Najjar’ into the Lebanese Basketball 1st Division Championship had probably opened the door for the Lebanese sports in general and the Lebanese basketball in particular.

Actually, the reduction of teams from 12 to 8 in the season 2003-2004 was one of the steps of the initial basketball project started by multi-millionaire Antoine Choueireh in the middle of the 90’s. Choueireh’s, the Club Sagesse President and the owner of multiple shares inside the LBCI²³⁴, main objective was to make of Lebanon one of the top-ten basketball countries in the world²³⁵. With the strong influence he had inside the Lebanese Basketball Federation²³⁶, he opted for the teams’ number reduction. This resulted in the emergence of a handful of wealthy clubs, one of which is the team he is sponsoring, Sagesse. Choueireh also promoted basketball in the whole Middle-East where he encouraged the rise of teams in Jordan, Syria, the Gulf countries and Iran. All these measures were undertaken to create what he thought would be the indispensable step of the growth of basketball

²³² See Italian Basketball Federation official website, 2003-2004 list of the 1st division participating teams [In Italian].

²³³ See Spanish Futsal National League official website, 2003-2004 list of the 1st division participating teams [In Spanish].

²³⁴ Oral interview with Madeleine Seba, LBCI employee, done in January 2007.

²³⁵ See Sagesse official website magazine, Choueireh’s interview in the Sagesse magazine in December 2003.

²³⁶ See Lebanese Basketball Federation official website, 1999 archives. In the 1999 elections, Antoine Choueiri’s list won the elections, and the people that were put in the federations shared Choueiri’s goal.

in Lebanon: An Arab Pro League (what he called the Arab NBA) or a West-Asian Pro League²³⁷. He thought that the Lebanese market (4 Millions inhabitants) is not big enough to permit the economic growth of Lebanese basketball leading teams, which were supposed to produce the country's best basketball players. With the Arab Pro League, the market will be much larger (300 Millions inhabitants). It is by wanting to make of Lebanese basketball a regional 'product' that so much money has been invested²³⁸, and all the youth development, naturalisation and bringing in of foreign players, are measures that have been encouraged.

The goal of this part of the chapter is to see if this basketball promotion is a proper model of sport development in the country; and if it has encouraged the promotion of other disciplines in Lebanon.

The start of this basketball booming mechanism has been launched in a period following a decade and a half of conflicts that saw the absence of any kind of sport policy. The Lebanese basketball model is the first of his kind in the country. It was planned and developed in a troubled country that had completely lost all traces of sport culture and identity. Despite having drawn a significant fan base and mass participation in the end of the 90's, Lebanese basketball still risks being a trend that might disappear. Indeed, the core of its 'media appeal' is the Sunni versus Maronite

²³⁷ See Sagesse official website magazine, Choueireh's interview in the Sagesse magazine in December 2003.

²³⁸ See St.Joseph University Master's Thesis in sociology, Zeina Tohme Adaime, 'Analysis of a success: Lebanese basketball' (2002) [In French].

Beirut derby between the clubs Sporting and Sagesse²³⁹. The latter, represented the whole Christian community which, after the 1990 Taef accords that led to the exile of General Aoun to France in 1991 (p.63), and the imprisonment of Samir Geagea in 1994²⁴⁰, saw itself without any significant political representation. LBCI (Lebanese Broadcasting Company International) took advantage of this frustration and turned it into a massive Christian infatuation towards basketball. Without this political struggle, the basketball ‘passion’ would probably not have been so strong²⁴¹.

Moreover, the Choueireh’s ‘road to professionalism’ strategy has created a strategy where only the very rich clubs could survive; and the downfall of many other clubs representing many different villages and regions of Lebanon: ‘Kahraba’ (Zouk, Keserouan region, Lebanese mountain), ‘Tadamoun’ (Zouk, Keserouan region, Lebanese mountain), Rosaire (Mansourieh, Metn region, Lebanese mountain), Meziara (North of Lebanon), Mont-La-Salle (Ain Saade, Metn region, Lebanese mountain), ‘Sadaka’ (south suburbs of Beirut). The quick rise and fall of all these teams show that Lebanese basketball is still an instable market. Moreover, from the 8 clubs that took part in the 2003-2004 Basketball 1st Division Championship, 7 are from Beirut and its suburbs and only one is from another region (Anibal Zahle, representing the Bekaa). If the growth in the budget of the top clubs has undoubtedly improve the game standards, this centralisation of basketball that is now ‘held’ by the richest clubs of the capital will, probably, on

²³⁹ See Leah Boukhater article, ‘Basket au Liban’, ‘Outre-Terre. Revue française de géopolitique’, n° 8, pp. 129-130 [In French].

²⁴⁰ See ‘*Al-Nahar*’ Newspapers 1994 archives [In Arabic].

²⁴¹ See Leah Boukhater article, ‘Basket au Liban’, ‘Outre-Terre. Revue française de géopolitique’, n° 8, pp. 129-130 [In French].

the long term, lead to a lack of involvement from the other regions of Lebanon, and therefore cause a drop in the mass participation, pool of talents, and consequently, in the international sport results.

If Lebanese basketball showed a high degree of maturity in its marketing strategy, the federation management and members' nominations have stayed archaic. The decisions were all taken by Antoine Choueireh, and in the 1999 Lebanese Basketball Federation elections, Choueireh's list unanimously won the vote²⁴². Besides being the President of the champion club, Sagesse, and the main dealer of the television contract, he became also the 'real' (although unofficial) head of the federation. When a sport is 'held' by one single person, the federation will be subject to 'undemocratic' behaviour, which would prevent and discourage other investors or contractors to enter the basketball scene, which would in turn become too dependent on this person. Actually, many of the basketball conflicts between 2000 and 2004 were around the accusation of Choueireh's power abuse and on the federation's 'biased' attitude towards the Sagesse club²⁴³. Choueireh's reactions to what he considered 'unjustified' criticism were that these detractors' only wish is to impede his basketball development plan. Choueireh has threatened several time to resign, an attitude that has caused a great deal of concern inside the basketball family that has learned to rely on him. In the summer 2004; after several months of tension around the launching of the Arab Pro League, Choueireh announced his retirement from Lebanese basketball. Although other investors were ready to take over, Choueireh's mechanism that he had composed of federation members, media and fan base (for many of the Sagesse fans, especially the Christians of the

²⁴² See '*Al-Nahar*' Newspaper October 1999 archives [In Arabic].

²⁴³ See '*Al-Nahar*' Newspaper archives from 2000 to 2004 [In Arabic].

Lebanese Forces political party, Choueireh was the closest figure to their imprisoned political leader, Samir Geagea²⁴⁴) proved to be successful in terms of mass participation and international results. Hence his resignation opened the way to an era of uncertainty inside the Lebanese basketball arena.

In another word, despite having shown very successful results, by being in the ‘hands’ of one person, the Lebanese basketball movement could loose some of its autonomy and the capacity of developing a market by itself. The basketball ‘boom’ started in the middle of the 90’s on a ‘virgin territory’, away from any government initiative. The first two official documents, the Decree 6997 and the Law 629 (p.98) have respectively been signed by the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports in December 2001 and November 2004. Therefore, the government did not have the experience, knowledge and capacity to control the drifts linked to a fast expansion of a given sport movement. A strong sport-state legislation could have probably prevented the outburst of the aforementioned numerous conflicts.

What were the repercussions of this basketball development on the other Lebanese sports? The massive investment and media exposure of Antoine Choueireh has created a trend in the Lebanese economic scene that led to a strong interest and involvement of the country’s top businessmen and high-ranked politicians²⁴⁵ in

²⁴⁴ See Leah Boukhater article, ‘Basket au Liban’, ‘Outre-Terre. Revue française de géopolitique’, n° 8, pp. 129-130 [In French].

²⁴⁵ See Leah Boukhater article, ‘Basket au Liban’, ‘Outre-Terre. Revue française de géopolitique’, n° 8, pp. 129-130 [In French].

sport. This situation, in a nation with a very small sport culture²⁴⁶, has caused a mechanism where almost the totality of the investment and sponsorship of the sport movement went to basketball. Even if the other sports wanted to emulate basketball, they did not have the budget to do so²⁴⁷. The situation actually became worse for them. The money that basketball could generate combined with its media exposure attracted most of the young athletes, who became much more interested in a sport where they could obtain opportunities of recognition and financial rewards. Therefore, the other sports lost many licensees, potential fans and their standards went significantly down. For many coaches and heads of federations, basketball ‘killed’ the other sports²⁴⁸. Moreover, the lack of government participation made of Lebanese sport an ultra-capitalist ‘jungle’ where the ‘small’ sports had enormous difficulties to obtain adequate support²⁴⁹. Basketball undoubtedly showed elements of sport success. However, their scales were disproportionate with the country’s sport characteristics and instead of catching up, the other disciplines lost a great deal of mass participation and sank into media anonymity. The gap between basketball and other sports was even widened by the lack of backing from the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports.

The basketball boom resulting from a strategy of private investors combined with the absence of government-sport policy is a common practice in developing

²⁴⁶ See Pierre Blanc article, ‘Le sport au Liban: un révélateur de la société’, ‘Les Cahiers de Confluences’, Chapitre 15, pp. 159-161 [In French].

²⁴⁷ See Interview with the Lebanese Judo Federation President François Saadé done in May 2003 in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon.

²⁴⁸ Oral interview done in September 2005, with Football coach Antoine Abi Rashed.

²⁴⁹ See interviews with different Lebanese sport persons done from February to September 2003 in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

countries in search of international recognition²⁵⁰. The sport movements of these nations try to adapt the developed countries' competitive sport models without analysing the conditions of application, and by completely neglecting the characteristics of their societies, which do not have yet the conditions to create a mechanism of high-standard performance. They bet on the international success of their countries in a major sport imported from the Western world and forget about their traditional physical activities; therefore, not develop a sport identity and culture. If, at the national scale, basketball has been the most successful sport, in the international basketball scene, Lebanon is still a 'minor' country. Indeed, despite all the million dollars invested²⁵¹, in the 2002 FIBA (International Basketball Federation) World Championship, Lebanon has lost its 6 games and ended in the last spot. This money has been spent 'at the expense' of the other disciplines. Actually, qualifying a team sport to a world championship is an achievement never reached before in the history of the country. However, if a similar (or even smaller) budget has been invested in some sports where the Lebanese athletes had the potential to succeed, Lebanon could have probably won several world medals, and this could have had very positive repercussions on the country's sport movement²⁵². Many of the former Soviet-Union republics, for example Georgia, Azerbaijan and Belarus, invested in sports that correspond with their cultural and physical characteristics and, at the same time, do not require

²⁵⁰ See : - Patrick Bouchet and Mohammad Kaach article, 'Existe-t-il un « modèle sportif » dans les pays africains francophones ?' STAPS revue N.65 [In French].

- Abdel Rahamane Baba-Moussa article, 'L'organisation du sport au Bénin. Continuités et ruptures depuis 1990?' STAPS revue N.65 [In French].

²⁵¹ See St.Joseph University Master's Thesis in sociology, Zeina Tohme Adaime, 'Analysis of a success: Lebanese basketball' (2002) [In French].

²⁵² See: - Interview with the Lebanese Judo Federation President François Saade done in May 2003, in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon.

- Interview with the Lebanese Judo athlete Wissam Abi Nader done in May 2003, in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon.

massive financial investment²⁵³. In the next part of this chapter, we will see if Lebanon has adopted this kind of strategy and therefore will be devoted to the results that this country has obtained in these ‘minor sports.

IV-4- Lebanese achievements in the ‘minor sports’

Minor sports have been commonly linked with ‘misconceptions’. The lack of media coverage and recognition that they were subject to, gave the idea that they are ‘unserious’ sports, not requiring an extensive preparation. For many sport persons²⁵⁴, winning medals in these sports is just achieved by talented athletes, and that these minor sports competition standards are not yet very high. Actually, most of the ‘minor’ Olympic (judo, weightlifting, tae kwon do) and non-Olympic disciplines (karate, squash, roller sports)²⁵⁵ are played by more than 75% of the countries of the planet. The media coverage and money involved are smaller than those given to the famous sports (football, tennis, car racing, golf), making the level

²⁵³ See : - ‘Karate Bushido’ magazine 1999 archives : The Government of Azerbaijan invest a lot of money on combat sports, which it considers inexpensive and corresponding to the people of Azerbaijan sport mentality and culture [In French].

- International Olympic Committee official website 2004 Olympic Games medal ranking. Azerbaijan, Georgia and Belarus gold medals in the 2004 Olympic Games have been mainly obtained in combat sports.

²⁵⁴ See interview with the Lebanese Judo Federation President François Saade, done in May 2003, in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon.

²⁵⁵ See GAISF (General Assembly of International Sport Federations) official website, 2004 federations members’ statistics.

of competition probably lower. But in order to succeed in these minor sports, they still require massive support from the different sport bodies or private sponsors. Azerbaijan, Georgia and Belarus did not get most of its gold medals in judo, wrestling and tae kwon do in the 2004 Olympic games only due to the talent of its athletes, but mainly because their governments have concentrated on helping sports that are deeply-rooted in the community, rather than trying to achieve success in the ‘big’ international sports.

Such strategy has not, however, been employed in Lebanon considering that the elite athletes and federations heads of these ‘minor’ inexpensive sports (Judo, tae kwon do, wushu) receive a very small support from the government and private sponsors²⁵⁶. Actually, the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Lebanese Olympic Committee had never done an analysis on which sports correspond to the natural and cultural characteristics of the Lebanese people²⁵⁷. 15 years of civil war has undoubtedly dismantled all traces of sport cultural heritages. However, the historical and geographical backgrounds of Lebanon show, in the middle of the 20th century, a liking for certain kinds of physical activities. In the 19th century, under the Ottoman Empire, ‘Mount-Lebanon’ was the country’s region that officially enjoyed the highest degree of autonomy²⁵⁸. It is there where the Lebanese culture and sense of identity were developed. In 1920, when today’s Lebanon was established under the French mandate, most of the people of the villages moved to

²⁵⁶ See Interviews with different Lebanese sport persons, done from February to September 2003, in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

²⁵⁷ Oral interviews with the secretary of the Lebanese Olympic Committee, Mrs Samar Younes and Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports administrator Andrée Nassour, done in December 2005.

²⁵⁸ See Kamal Salibi, The Modern History Of Lebanon (Worcester and London: Ebenezer Baylis and Son, Limited, The Trinity Press, 1965) p.106-120.

Beirut and the other major coastal cities (Sidon, Tripoli, Tyre). Therefore, a very big part of the Lebanese population is constituted of countrymen descendants. With the arrival of the car in the middle of the 20th century²⁵⁹ and the development of public transport, the mountains (highest point) became within one-hour reach from the sea level (p.24), making the internal traveling much easier. Therefore, the people of the cities of Lebanon always had very strong ties with their villages of origin. That is why most of them are still deeply soaked with their villages' lifestyle and culture.

Lebanese villages have been the birthplace of several traditional physical activities²⁶⁰. Indeed, competitions drawing large crowds, where men from different villages opposed each other, were regularly organised. The competitions consisted of the following games: the lifting of heavy objects, pulling of the church bell (this game was particularly played in the Christians villages) and arm-wrestling. All the country's villages' traditional physical activities were games of strength, reflecting the strong infatuation and its symbolism. These trends undoubtedly explain the infatuation that Lebanese had, in the middle of the century, for sports like wrestling, catch²⁶¹, weightlifting and bodybuilding²⁶². It is also one of the reasons why the only 4 medals of Lebanon in the Olympic Games were obtained in the sports of Greco-Roman wrestling and weightlifting (p.75-76). And bodybuilding,

²⁵⁹ Oral interview done in February 2008 with employees in TGF (T.Gargour & Fils), the exclusive and sole agent of Mercedes-Benz in Lebanon and Jordan. Mercedes-Benz was among the first cars that were introduced in Lebanon. TGF introduced Mercedes-Benz vehicle to Lebanon back in 1952.

²⁶⁰ See Labib Boutros, Lebanese Village Games (Beirut: New codmos edition, 1986) p.3-59 [In Arabic].

²⁶¹ Catch, now called pro-wrestling is more about sport-entertainment but it was mentioned here because it remains a physical activity.

²⁶² See Joseph Sacre, Le Sport Au Liban, (Beirut: Joseph Reaydé Edition, 1980) p.53-56, p.99-104, p.115-123 [In French]

thanks to Samir Bannout, has been the only discipline offering to Lebanon an amateur and professional world title (p.75). The war, however, has dealt to these a major blow. While conflicts were bursting in all the areas of the country, stopping a proper development of any organised physical activity, international sport has entered an era of professionalism that has strongly improved its standards²⁶³. Thus, after 1990, Greco-Roman wrestling and weightlifting standards went down, and Lebanon was not able to achieve any remarkable international success in these sports. The only sport that survived in terms of international results was bodybuilding. From 1981 to 2004, thanks to Samir Bannout, Ahmed Haidar, Ali Malla and Eduardo Kawak, Lebanese bodybuilding has been present in 15 of the 24 ‘Mr.Olympia’ competition (the number one bodybuilding competition in the world). Lebanon is among the only 5 countries (the 4 others are the U.S.A, Austria, Great Britain, Puerto Rico and Italy) that have won a ‘Mr.Olympia’ competition²⁶⁴. All this has been achieved in the war and post-war periods, where bodybuilding, like almost all the Lebanese sports, received little support. So what was behind this success?

It is commonly thought that developing countries have a much bigger chance to obtain medals in the individual sports; especially, if these sports, like bodybuilding, weightlifting and powerlifting, do not require the presence of a training partner. So, to achieve success in bodybuilding, all the athlete has to do is pay a monthly contribution fee (\$25 a month as an average price²⁶⁵) to the gym at the ‘corner of the street’, train properly and regularly. At the first glance, bodybuilding seems to

²⁶³ See Patrick Bouchet and Mohammad Kaach article, ‘Existe-t-il un « modèle sportif » dans les pays africains francophones ?’ STAPS revue N.65 [In French]

²⁶⁴ See Mr.Olympia official website, ‘all-time list of the winners’.

²⁶⁵ Oral interview with Lebanese bodybuilding coach Ziad Rifai done in February 2008.

be a very inexpensive and accessible sport. This is certainly true for all the persons who intend to be involved in bodybuilding as a pastime; however, the conditions change drastically when these athletes intend to compete in this sport. It is impossible for an athlete to compete in bodybuilding today without integrating nutrition supplements in his diet nutrition²⁶⁶. The latter are very expensive (several thousands \$U.S a year²⁶⁷) especially for athletes coming from a country with so much economical difficulties like Lebanon. So how did Samir Bannout, Ali Malla, Eduardo Kawak and Ahmed Haidar, without sponsorship and with a very limited government backing²⁶⁸ were able to have access to these supplements and achieve success in the highest level of their sports?

Most of the Lebanese elite bodybuilders are personal trainers and gym owners²⁶⁹. They are, in fact, small businessmen. They generate all of their revenues from their numerous students/clients. Actually, a very big part of the Lebanese youth is hooked to bodybuilding. If we consider that 40% of the Lebanese population (almost 1.5 Millions inhabitants) practise what Joseph Sacre calls ‘sports for all’ (that constitutes in fact all the activities practised by people to keep in shape)²⁷⁰, and the very large number of health clubs that has scattered in the country in the 80’s and 90’s²⁷¹, we can easily deduce that many of the ‘sports for all’ practitioners are health clubs members. If the women of these clubs are more inclined to

²⁶⁶ OTV (Orange TV) interview with Dr. Roger Melki, head of the medical committee of the Lebanese Olympic Committee made in February 2008.

²⁶⁷ Oral interview with Lebanese bodybuilding coach Ziad Rifai in February 2008.

²⁶⁸ OTV (Orange TV) interview with Lebanese elite bodybuilder Mohammad Bannout, made in February 2008.

²⁶⁹ Oral interview with Lebanese bodybuilding coach Ziad Rifai in February 2008.

²⁷⁰ See Joseph Sacre 1990 official report to the Lebanese Government [In French].

²⁷¹ See 2003 Lebanese Ministry of Finances, list of declared Health Clubs [In Arabic].

participate in fitness and aerobic classes, most of the men practise bodybuilding²⁷². If we consider the whole ‘bodybuilding population’ that includes all these health clubs members, and not only the Lebanese Weightlifting, Powerlifting and Bodybuilding Federation²⁷³ licensees (athletes, coaches, federation members) that participate in the competitive part of this sport, bodybuilding is by far the number one sport in Lebanon in terms of mass participation. The big demand for this sport has crowded the gyms with bodybuilders, and contributed to the wealth of the sport coaches and owners, who, to become models in these sports and attract more students-clients, had to participate and succeed in the top competitions. This has created a mechanism of bodybuilding culture and infatuation that boosted the standards of this sport and permitted the emergence of world-class athletes like Bannout, Haidar, Malla and Kawak. With a very large mass participation and remarkable international sport results, obtained without a relevant sponsorship or governmental backing, bodybuilding is by far the most successful sport in the history of Lebanon. But have these results been able to draw a fan base, necessary to turn bodybuilding into a national sport?

In the last 15 years, despite all these international successes and the very large number of practitioners, bodybuilding has been the object of very small media exposure²⁷⁴. Televisions and newspapers are not ready to broadcast or cover a sport

²⁷² Oral interview with Lebanese bodybuilding coach Ziad Rifai in February 2008.

²⁷³ See Lebanese Olympic Committee 2003 ‘list of the federations’ document [In Arabic]. Bodybuilding is part of the Lebanese Federation of Weightlifting, Powerlifting and Bodybuilding.

²⁷⁴ See : - LBCI (Lebanese Broadcasting company international), ‘Al-Manar TV’, ‘Future TV’, ‘New TV’ official websites, 1990 to 2004 listings.

- ‘*L’Orient-Le-Jour*’, ‘*Al-Nahar*’ newspapers 1990 to 2004 sport archives [In French].
- OTV (Orange TV) interview with Lebanese elite bodybuilder Mohammad Bannout, conducted in February 2008.

that is not able to draw a significant fan base. So, how come that a discipline, played by so many people in the country, achieving so many results, is not being able to attract fans and media agents?

There are two main reasons behind Lebanon bodybuilding's lack of recognition. First of all, most of the international professional bodybuilding scene is centralised in the United States of America. From 1975 to 2004, out of 30 'Mr.Olympia' ('Mr.Olympia' is supposed to be the pinnacle of world bodybuilding) competitions, 25 have been organised in the U.S, and in the last decade (1994-2004), all of them have been run there²⁷⁵. Therefore, in order to succeed in the professional level, a bodybuilder must necessarily move to the U.S. Thus, the bodybuilder's road to fame has to start far from home, for a country, where bodybuilding is not even a major sport in term of media exposure and fan base²⁷⁶. Actually, the only U.S sport covered regularly in the Lebanese newspapers and televisions is basketball (NBA: National Basketball Association). The 'Mr.Olympia' event has never received any significant media attention from the country's journals and broadcasters²⁷⁷. So, despite their uniqueness in terms of Lebanese international results, Bannout, Haidar, Malla and Kawak achievements have passed 'unnoticed'. Apparently, the many young men 'lifting weight' in the different health clubs did not start the sport because they want to become the next Bannout or Haidar, but probably because it is the most accessible way for them to keep in shape. Indeed, unlike many other sports requiring teammates and fixed training schedule, bodybuilding can be

²⁷⁵ See 'Mr.Olympia's' official website.

²⁷⁶ See major American sport broadcaster ESPN (Entertainment and Sports Programming Network) official website. Bodybuilding is not present in the website.

²⁷⁷ See : - 'Al-Nahar' newspapers 1990-2004 sport archives [In Arabic].

- LBCI (Lebanese Broadcasting Company International) official website 1990 to 2004 listings.

practised alone anytime. Most of the gyms open the whole day and the athletes can come and work out under the supervision of a coach who is usually hired to remain there the whole day²⁷⁸.

The other reason behind bodybuilding media exposure deficit is its image of ‘unclean’ sport. Actually, its bad reputation follows it everywhere. In fact, bodybuilding is part of GAISF (General Assembly of International Federation)²⁷⁹, which put down a system of criteria and recognition for any sport federation. However, despite a strong promotion campaign²⁸⁰, bodybuilding has never been able to take part in the Olympic programme. It did not even get the status of IOC (International Olympic Committee) recognised international sport federations (unlike sports like bowling, dance sport and racquetball, that are not ‘yet’ part of the Olympic programme, but, unlike bodybuilding, they all received a recognition ‘certificate’ from the IOC)²⁸¹. The relegation of bodybuilding is certainly not due to the lack of practitioners and countries participating. It is practised by millions of amateurs around the world and the IFBB actually has 177 affiliated national federations²⁸². It is however only recognised by 90 national Olympic committees (almost 50% of the affiliated national federations). In the ‘Havas Group’ sport ranking, bodybuilding is not taken in consideration²⁸³. The ‘rejection’ of

²⁷⁸ Oral interview with Lebanese bodybuilding coach Ziad Rifai done in February 2008.

²⁷⁹ See GAISF (General Assembly of International Sport Federation) official website, 2004 ‘list of the international sport federations’.

²⁸⁰ See International Federation of Bodybuilders (IFBB) official website archives. Ben Weider, president of the federation has been trying to ‘push’ the sport to the Olympics for almost 40 years.

²⁸¹ See International Olympic Committee official website, list of ‘summer Olympic international sport federations’, ‘winter Olympic international sport federations’ and ‘IOC recognised international sports federations’.

²⁸² See IFBB official website statistics.

²⁸³ See ‘Havas Group official website’, 2005 ‘Havas Group’ nations sport ranking methodology.

bodybuilding is due to the ‘suspicion’ that the world sport community has towards the ethics of its athletes²⁸⁴. Indeed, most of them are considered to be performance-enhancing drugs-taker. This bad reputation of bodybuilding has increased to such an extent that many international organisations of natural bodybuilding have seen the daylight and tried to give a new ‘clean’ image to the sport²⁸⁵. This effort has however not gone very far as those ‘natural’ athletes are also suspected of using performance-enhancing drugs²⁸⁶. In the last several decades, the sport of bodybuilding has lost a lot of its credibility. Today, bodybuilding historians talk about the pre and post steroid eras²⁸⁷. The steroid era that has started in the 60’s and has grown in the last 40 years has taken the sport to a dimension where the athletes’ bodies have reached a size that could have never been imagined before and seem unrealistic to human performance. The bodybuilder’s image has declined and today’s practitioners and fans are much more interested in the ideals of the pre-steroid bodybuilders and the fitness models²⁸⁸.

In Lebanon, doping tests are not properly established yet. Actually, they are too expensive for the different sport federations. Only 3 sports can afford them and use them in the final stages of the national championships: Football, basketball and

²⁸⁴ See IFBB official website archives. The principal reason behind the refusal of the Olympic Movement was that the latter ‘accused’ the bodybuilders of excessively using performance-enhancing drugs.

²⁸⁵ See WNBFF (World Natural Bodybuilding Federation) official website and INBA (International Natural Bodybuilding Association) official website.

²⁸⁶ Oral interview with Lebanese bodybuilding coach Ziad Rifai in February 2008.

²⁸⁷ See 2006 British Society of Sports History conference:

- ‘Hercules vs Appollo : Bodybuilding ideology in the early twentieth century’ by Jan Todd.
- ‘The yearning for muscular power’ by Terrence Todd.

²⁸⁸ See 2006 British Society of Sports History conference:

- ‘The yearning for muscular power’ by Terrence Todd.

marathon²⁸⁹. The Lebanese bodybuilding championship does not organise doping tests. So, Lebanese bodybuilders cannot be officially ‘accused’ of doping. However, in a survey done by the Lebanese Olympic Committee Medical Committee²⁹⁰, it was stated that 90% of Lebanese bodybuilders use performance-enhancing drugs. Consequently, to the eye of the country’s sport community, Lebanese elite bodybuilders could not be seen as ‘legitimate’ champions.

Despite all the international achievements, Lebanese bodybuilding has not been able to draw mass participation and fan base, essential to turn this physical activity into a national sport. The very large number of bodybuilding practitioners is much more due to the sport accessibility than to the image of its champions. Although the latter arrive at the pinnacle of their sport after several years of dedication and effort²⁹¹, their sport ‘hygiene’ is no secret to the Lebanese and international sport community, and could not therefore attract medias and fans, who are much more keen to follow ‘clean’ sport events. The problem of Lebanese bodybuilding is more related to bodybuilding than to Lebanon.

All the sports mentioned in this chapter (high-jump, skiing, shooting, rugby league, basketball and bodybuilding) have more or less offered to Lebanon, in the post-war period, a certain degree of sport success. The national scale of these achievements differed from one event to another, but they can all provide to the country elements of sport success: Individual talent (high-jump, skiing, shooting,

²⁸⁹ Oral interview with Lebanese bodybuilding coach Ziad Rifai done in February 2008.

²⁹⁰ OTV (Orange TV) interview with Dr. Roger Melki, head of the medical committee of the Lebanese Olympic Committee, done in February 2008.

²⁹¹ Oral interview with Lebanese bodybuilding coach Ziad Rifai done in February 2008.

bodybuilding), sponsorship, media coverage, marketing, development of a fan base, naturalisation of foreign players, federation efficient youth programme (basketball), and the use of the Lebanese Diaspora (basketball and rugby league). What was principally lacking in the outcome of the analysis of these successes was the presence of a defined sport policy. According to the Lebanese Olympic Committee and Ministry of Youth and Sports heads²⁹², there is not any document that defines the existence of a sport policy in Lebanon. This is undoubtedly one of the reasons behind the ‘absence’ of the government in sport-related matters. The setting of a sport policy will constitute the core of the plan for development proposed in the next and final chapter of this work.

²⁹² Oral interviews with the secretary of the Lebanese Olympic Committee Mrs Samar Younes and Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports administrator Andrée Nassour done in December 2005.

Chapter V- Plan for development

This chapter contains my own analysis of what is needed in Lebanon to develop sport, and it considers the possibility of a government-based programme of action.

The absence of the Lebanese Government in sport-related matters is characterised by 2 factors: A very small budget²⁹³ and the absence of a defined sport policy²⁹⁴. The small budget is not a surprise for a developing country coming out of 15 years of conflicts. The main task of the government that took over in the end of 1990 was to undertake the reconstruction of Lebanon. Thus, a huge amount of money has been invested to restore the different damaged cities. The investment was so massive that the debt accumulated during that period was estimated, in the year 2003, between 33 Billions and \$41 Billions²⁹⁵. Such a massive rehabilitation project in a country prey to economic difficulties, sport could not be a priority. Subsequently, the absence of sport policy could be easily linked with the low

²⁹³ See report done in the year 2005 under the protocol of the cooperation between the French Embassy and the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports, written by Henri-Pierre Gazzeri et Jean-François Isnard concerning the valuation mission for the implementation of coaching programmes [In French].

²⁹⁴ Oral interviews with the secretary of the Lebanese Olympic Committee, Mrs Samar Younes, and the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports administrator Andrée Nassour, done in December 2005.

²⁹⁵ See United Nations official website, 2004 statistics on Lebanon.

budget devoted to sport by the Lebanese Government. Actually, with a budget barely sufficient to cover the expenses of its internal functioning, the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports do not have the financial resources to intervene directly and support the Lebanese sport movement. To counter these deficiencies, 2 strategies can be opted:

- The search of ‘parallel’ sources of investments that could ‘feed’ the application of an elaborated sport policy.
- The establishment of a sport policy that would create a mechanism that would enhance the development of sport in the country; and, at the same time, encourage investors and private sponsors to invest in the development of the sport institutions.

François Saadé, the President of the Lebanese Judo federation has suggested a way to finance Lebanese sport in a continuous way²⁹⁶: ‘I hope that the new measure proposed by the son of the president, Emile Lahoud Jr. (who is a former swimming champion and a Deputy in the Parliament), which asked that 1% of the money coming from the tax on alcohol and tobacco goes to sport, will be accepted. We have been asking for this measure for 20 years now. We will then have 17 to \$18 Millions for sport. Things will then get better for sure.’ This measure, proposed by Emile Lahoud Jr. and encouraged by François Saadé, is very similar to that proposed by the UK sport funding model²⁹⁷. The United Kingdom is a nation with a very rich sport heritage; it has initiated many of the world’s most recognised modern sports: football, rugby, cricket, boxing, golf²⁹⁸... It is also ranked 6th in the

²⁹⁶ See interview with the Lebanese Judo Federation President François Saade, done in May 2003, in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon.

²⁹⁷ Oral interview with Alexandra Russell, UK Sport administrator, done in September 2006.

²⁹⁸ See : - FIFA (International Football Federation) official website archives.
- IRB (International Rugby Board) official website archives.

all-times Olympic Medal count²⁹⁹ and 9th in the 2005 Havas Group nations sport ranking³⁰⁰. For a developing country, like Lebanon, to try to apply a top-ten country sport' funding model is quite a challenge. But is Lebanon ready for this kind of measure? Let us suppose that this kind of proposal is accepted, how will the money be spent?

According to François Saade, the money should be spent according to the 'merits' of each federation³⁰¹. But how will the government define these 'merits'? Is it by taking into consideration the international results obtained by each sport? If this is the case, 'choosing' such a sport would pose some difficulties; especially, since most of these sports are struggling to enter the international scene³⁰². And how much of this money will be consecrated to the grass roots development and mass participation? The search for sources of investment is of considerable importance. However, it can be useless if there is not any defined and clarified system delineating where this money would be spent. Before looking for ways to fund the Lebanese sport system, the government, the Ministry of Education (the latter is mentioned because it is responsible of a large part of the school and universities' sport movement), the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Lebanese Olympic Committee, should coordinate to establish a sport policy whose target is the formation of a durable mechanism that will develop the mass participation

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- ICC (International Cricket Council) official website archives.
 - AIBA (International Boxing Association) official website archives.
 - IGF (International Golf Federation) official website archives.

²⁹⁹ See International Olympic Committee official website, 'All-times olympics medal ranking'.

³⁰⁰ See 'Havas Group' official website, 2005 Havas Group nations sport ranking.

³⁰¹ See interview with the Lebanese Judo Federation President François Saade, done in May 2003, in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon.

³⁰² See interviews to different Lebanese sport persons, done from February to September 2003 in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

necessary to increase the talents pool, improve the sport results, create a fan base that will in return ‘feed’ the mass participation³⁰³.

The first step to be taken by the main governmental sport or sport-related bodies should be targeted towards the mass participation development. This mass participation is essential to the establishment of any sport system. It is the base of the sport pyramid. The bigger this base is, the more chance will have the elite athletes, to have better standards at the top of the pyramid³⁰⁴. France has the third position in the 2005 Havas Group nations sport ranking³⁰⁵.

It is out of the 26 Millions sport practitioners that the 9.7 Millions federation licensees emerged, and who constituted the base of the 15586 elite athletes; those that have offered the cumulative amount of 251 medals (88 gold medals, 74 silver and 89 bronze) for France, in the 2002 Salt lake City Winter Olympic Games, the 2004 Athens Summer Olympic Games, and in the latest world championships and ranking in 51 sports between 2002 and 2005³⁰⁶. It is therefore towards the enlargement of the small Lebanese sport pyramid base that the country’s main sport bodies should work.

³⁰³ See Table 12 of the Appendix.

³⁰⁴ See : - Table 13 of the Appendix.

- Sport Free Attitude Magazine N.75 – December 16th 2005 [In French]

³⁰⁵ See ‘Havas Group’ official website, 2005 Havas Group nations sport ranking.

³⁰⁶ See Havas Group official website, 2005 Havas Group nations sport ranking methodology.

To attain such high standards, the most important measure that has to be taken is the introduction of physical education as a compulsory subject in all the Lebanese schools. Developing sport curriculum in schools is essential to increase the mass participation, sport culture and the talent pool. Actually, the establishment of physical education as a compulsory subject in the schools was a turning point in the history of French sport policy³⁰⁷. Indeed, after the Second World War, from 1948 to 1960, France was faced with an unprecedented sport crisis. It was strongly lacking in sport equipment and infrastructure, in proportion to the population growth that it experienced during that period. The results attained by France in the Summer Olympic Games were far less than what was expected. In the London 1948 Olympic Games, France was ranked 3rd, in Helsinki 1952 its ranking went down to 7th, in Melbourne 1956 to 11th and in Rome, in 1960, France obtained the 25th position with 0 gold medal: it was the first time in its Olympic history³⁰⁸. This downfall drew the attention of the French President General Charles De Gaulle who considered sport as a national affair. For De Gaulle, a country having the historical prestige of France should be among the top countries in all the different sectors, including sport. In what became the 5th republic, De Gaulle named Maurice Herzog, former world-class alpinist (who had climbed the Himalayas in 1950) head of the High Commissioner of Youth and Sports. Herzog started undertaking several decisive measures that were designed to regenerate French sport and create a successful long-term mechanism that was to remain for several decades. The first step taken by Herzog was the introduction of physical education as a school compulsory subject. By doing so, he gave to sport a national

³⁰⁷ See Jean-Paul Callède article, 'Les politiques du sport en France', L'Année Sociologique, 2002, 52, n.2, p.437 to p.457 [In French].

³⁰⁸ See International Olympic Committee official website, Rome 1960 olympics medal ranking.

importance. Sport spread into all the French regions. Mass participation was increased by the vast number of students and the schools infrastructures refurbished sport equipment. This action opened the way to the development of the field of sciences of physical education, research and elite sport. The rise in the number of students increased the need for more physical educators and sport researchers. Noticing that, the French Government, through the Ministry of Youth and Sports decided to finance the two main state's colleges for coaches and physical educators: ENSEPS ('Ecole Normale Supérieure d'Education Physique et Sportive' - High College of Physical Education and Sport) and INS ('Institut Nationale du Sport' - National Sport Institute). In 1970, the two bodies merged to found the very renowned INSEP ('Institut Nationale du Sport et de l'Education Physique' - National Institute for Physical Education and Sport)³⁰⁹. The INSEP and its regional poles (CREPS: 'Centres Régionaux d'Education Populaire et de Sport' – Regional Sport and Popular Educational Centre) became the main central and official organisations that coordinate sport-related programmes in France. They also became the home for the country's elite athletes. Indeed, after Middle School, the students that have both good grades and promising sport results were sent to an establishment that has a 'sport-études' (sport-studies) programme for their high school degree. This programme is the result of the coordination between the French Ministry of Education and the French Ministry of Youth and Sports³¹⁰. The main aim of these schools was to create a department where the athletes would be able to combine intensive training in their respective sports with their studies and profession. Actually, in modern sport, many of the countries that have achieved international sport success established a curriculum that linked high-level competition with regular academic programme (USA, former Soviet Union, former

³⁰⁹ See INSEP official website archives [In French].

³¹⁰ See INSEP official website. 'Sport-études' programme [In French].

Yugoslavia, Australia, New Zealand³¹¹). The results of this kind of strategy are not immediate: it took France at least 10 years to obtain regular and successful results. In the last 7 Summer Olympic games, apart from the one in 1984, France was always ranked among the top ten countries in the world³¹². In the last 3 Summer Olympic Games, the number of gold medals won by France always exceeded 10, and the total of medals always exceeded 30. If we take 1960 Olympics as the pinnacle of the French sport crisis, it became apparent that the solution proposed by Herzog, that started with the establishment of physical education as a compulsory school subject, and which has led later on to the creation of the INSEP, was a success. In 1960, the upper ranking percentile of France was 30.12%. After the 1980 Moscow Olympics, the percentile went always under 10% and in the last 3 Olympic Games, 1996, 2000 and 2004; the result went down and remained under 5%³¹³. The 'INSEP strategy' has also been used to develop French football³¹⁴. Following the disastrous results of France in the 60's football world cups³¹⁵, in

³¹¹ See : - NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) official website.

- J.Riordan, *Soviet Sport* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980).
- Oral interview with Mico Martic, Croatian national team futsal coach, done in November 2004.
- John Nauright (ed.), *Sport, Power And Society In New Zealand: Historical And Contemporary Perspectives* (1995).

³¹² See : - International Olympic Committee official website, 1984 to 2004 Olympic Games medal rankings.

- Patrick Bouchet and Mohammad Kaach article, 'Existe-t-il un « modèle sportif » dans les pays africains francophones ?' STAPS revue N.65. Being one of the best in the end of the 20th century is a much bigger achievement then being among the first in the 60's, 50's or before the World War II, considering the very high level of competition in sport now, due to the higher economic involvement of most of the world's governments after 1984 [In French].

³¹³ See : - Table 14 of the Appendix.

- International Olympic Committee official website, 'Olympic Games', 'Olympic results', 'medals by country'

³¹⁴ See French Football Federation official website archives. History of the National football schools ('Centre de Formation de Football) [In French].

³¹⁵ The French National Team did not qualify for the 1962 and 1970 world cups. It qualified for the 1966 FIFA World Cup but did not manage to win any game and was eliminated from the first round.

1970, a person called George Boulogne created the National Technical Directory and the National Football Institute. The concept was similar to the one developed in the INSEP. The results were also successful. In the 1982 and 1986 World Cups, France succeeded in reaching the 4th and the 3rd position. In 1984, France won the European Championship. In the middle of the 90's, French players were among the most demanded in the European football market. The biggest achievement, however, was reached when France won successively the 1998 World Cup and the 2000 European Championship. In 1998, 19 of the 22 players of the squad emerged from the different national football schools ('Centre de Formation de Football'). Among them, superstars like Zinedine Zidane, Thierry Henry, Bixente Lizarazu, Didier Deschamps and Laurent Blanc.

The development of sport in the French 5th republic was not only made by Herzog's implementation of physical education as a compulsory subject. This measure was actually the activator of the French sport industry mechanism. It developed the French sport market by increasing the sport material needs and offering more opportunities for coaches and physical educators. This permitted the creation of governmental schools for coaches (INSEP) and university physical education and sport departments (STAPS Faculty: 'Faculté des Sciences et Techniques des Activités Physiques et Sportives - Sport and physical education faculty'³¹⁶), which coordinated to improve sport research, which has strongly contributed to the development of elite sport. Herzog's successors, Pierre Mazeau and Edwige Avice organised and classified the different types of physical activities

³¹⁶ See STAPS (Faculté des Sciences et Techniques des Activités Physiques et Sportives) Luminy (Marseille, France) official website [In French].

to be introduced into the French sport system³¹⁷: elite, amateur non-elite competitive, leisure and 'sports for all'. In the 80's, under Roger Bambuck (former elite sprinter), the Ministry of Youth and Sports worked towards the decentralisation of French sport. And in the 20th century last decade, under the Youth and Sports Minister Marie-George Buffet, the French sport authorities fought against doping and the contract's abuse of professional sports. In short, the introduction of physical education into the school education programme was actually the first step towards the construction of the country's sport 'edifice'³¹⁸.

To ensure the success of this system, a massive financial support from the French Government was required; and to say that this strategy worked without public funding but only depended on the mechanism created by the sport movement would be a false allegation. The government's intervention was very important, especially in the elaboration of sport-related programmes. In the 80's, with the decentralisation phenomenon that has spread sport practice in all the French regions, the state's involvement reached its pinnacle³¹⁹. France became the 2nd country in Europe after Denmark in terms of governmental intervention in sport³²⁰. For the year 2005, a budget of more than Euros 700 Millions will be invested. According to some economy historians, 'France is a Soviet Union that has

³¹⁷ See Jean-Paul Callède article, 'Les politiques du sport en France', L'Année Sociologique, 2002, 52, n.2, p.437 to p.457 [In French].

³¹⁸ See Table 15 of the Appendix.

³¹⁹ See Jean-Paul Callède article, 'Les politiques du sport en France', L'Année Sociologique, 2002, 52, n.2, p.437 to p.457 [In French].

³²⁰ See French Ministry of Youth and Sports official website [In French].

worked³²¹. Actually, any sport system requires funding, but the first step that has to be taken is the elaboration of a mechanism, which, combined with sources of investment would ensure a long-term and durable sport development. The Lebanese Government's main sport bodies should probably look for the establishment of this sort of structure to improve sport in the country. Is Lebanon ready for this type of global sport strategy? Will what worked in France, find success in Lebanon?

There are many reasons to believe that Lebanon could adopt a similar sport development strategy to that recommended in France by Herzog. Indeed, France influence in Lebanon has been very strong in the 20th century. It was under the French mandate and protectorate in 1926 that the state of Lebanon has been declared³²². Actually, France has influenced Lebanon different sectors: social, economical, political and educational. The 1926 Constitution and 1943 National Pact texts have been inspired by the French third and fourth republic constitution³²³. The French education system prototype has widely spread in Lebanon, with the help of the different Christian congregations: Protestants, Marists, Jesuits, Antonins, Maronites, Orthodoxs.... The schools that have emerged from these congregations are very popular among the different religious communities in Lebanon, considering their high education standards. Each one of these establishments has several branch scattered in the different Lebanese regions.

³²¹ See Jaques Marseille, professor in Paris I University citation: 'La France, une sorte d'Union Soviétique qui aurait réussi' [In French].

³²² See Kamal Salibi, *The Modern History Of Lebanon* (Worcester and London: Ebenezer Baylis and Son, Limited, The Trinity Press, 1965) p.151-207.

³²³ See The Lebanese Constitution, translated by Gabriel M. Bustros B.Sc. (Econ) London 'Bureau of Lebanese and Arab documentation' 1973.

The students of these schools have the choice to pass either the French or Lebanese Baccalaureate exam in order to graduate. Moreover, in the last decades, the Lebanese Ministry of Education has issued an ordinance that equaled the French Baccalaureate with the Lebanese certificate³²⁴. Thus, the students entering the ‘French education’ schools could nowadays obtain the French Baccalaureate and have the same ‘privileges’ offered by the Lebanese Baccalaureate when they want to enroll to the different universities of the country. This equivalence procedure was facilitated by the fact that most of the Lebanese Baccalaureate subjects (apart from Arabic, Arabic history and geography) are given in French. So, the French education ‘flavour’ is already strongly soaked in the Lebanese culture.

These similarities between the two programmes do not, however, cover the field of physical education and sport (PES). If the students of both programmes have almost the same potential to become proficient in the ‘classical subjects’ (maths, physics, biology, French and English), only the students who are sitting for the French Baccalaureate have the chance to follow, since their childhood, a PES curriculum. The Lebanese Baccalaureate does not include a PES test, and consequently the schools following this programme never had the necessity to introduce a PES programme. This is a major issue affecting the Lebanese sport culture and youth mass participation. In yet more specific terms, the yearly average of students passing the French Baccalaureate is about 1600³²⁵ as to the 16000-

³²⁴ Oral interview with Najwa Fuleihan, Lebanese Ministry of Education advisor, done in February 2008.

³²⁵ Oral interview with Guy Sabatier, employee in the French Embassy in Lebanon, done in February 2008.

20000 students passing the Lebanese Baccalaureate³²⁶. So, for every student following a PES curriculum, there are more than 10 who have probably³²⁷ never attended a PES class or have been assessed in this subject. If the Lebanese Government, through the Ministry of Education, ‘imposes’ PES as a compulsory subject in the Lebanese education curriculum, sport importance will be taken to another level.

Since there is already a vast collaboration between the Lebanese and French Ministry of Education as stated before, there shouldn’t be any obstacle that may hinder any attempt to coordinate and come up with the best structure to successfully implement physical education as a compulsory subject in the Lebanese education curriculum. And in case this coordination is found difficult to build, the Lebanese Ministry of Education could start such a curriculum by simply ‘copying’ from the French model, that some of the Lebanese schools have been using for several decades (‘Notre-Dame of Jamhour’, ‘Frères Mont-La-Salle’, ‘Frères Maristes Champville’, ‘College Protestant’, ‘Grand Lycée Franco-Libanais’....). However, this programme cannot be ‘instantaneously’ introduced and developed, for many of the schools, that have never introduced any PES curriculum due to the absence of a compulsory programme from the government, have never found it necessary to build a sport infrastructure. Thus, imposing such a programme on them and asking them to apply it as soon as possible would be inappropriate and premature. The first period of this project should be introduced on a trial basis. The PES subject could be proposed as an option for the Lebanese Baccalaureate exam.

³²⁶ Oral interview with Najwa Fuleihan, Lebanese Ministry of Education advisor, done in February 2008.

³²⁷ It depends on the schools principals. Indeed, since there is not any PES programme imposed by the government, the elaboration of a PES class will depend on the principals’ will.

By optional subject we mean that the students can choose it as part of their final exam. In case they fail, it would not be counted. In case they succeed, their grade will be counted as a part towards their general average. This strategy will permit the Ministry of Education, the schools and the teachers to try the programme for the first couple of years, without putting the students at a risk of failing the Baccalaureate exam. Once these different organisations are able to ‘handle’ this programme, the Ministry of Education could then go to the next step. The Lebanese Baccalaureate will then have two options: one, with PES as a compulsory subject and another one with PES as an optional one. In the last case, in case the students choose the subject, the grade, whether they fail or succeed, will be counted in the general average. In this way, the schools that will propose PES for their students will be ‘forced’ to raise the standards of their curriculum. Imposing the subject for all the schools is impossible, because it will harm many of the schools that do not have the proper infrastructure to implement it. A gap of ‘non-PES’ schools (schools not implementing a PES curriculum) will therefore remain. However, the government, through the Ministry of Education could work towards not letting this gap widen. It could adopt one of the measures used in Croatia and the other countries heir of former Yugoslavia, where, every school, in order to have an official permit to open, must have a developed sport infrastructure³²⁸. Of course, this measure cannot be completely ‘put together’ in Lebanon. But, a new law, stipulating that every new school that intends to open and register its students in the Lebanese Baccalaureate, must have at its disposal an indoor basketball court, owned or lent, to meet the minimum requirement of physical activities in their curriculum to be practiced under any weather condition³²⁹, must be voted. To

³²⁸ Oral interview with Mico Martić, coach of Croatian national team, done in November 2004.

³²⁹ PES class, basketball, indoor football (Or futsal), volleyball, handball, gymnastics, athletics, table tennis, badminton....

facilitate the application of this law, every school has the right to participate in only two sports. The schools could therefore opt for inexpensive disciplines like badminton or table tennis that do not require a large space. This strategy, when implemented, requires 5 years to mature and 10 years to be fully efficient. The objective, at the end of the decade, is to have the highest number of schools, and consequently students, taking part in the PES curriculum of the Lebanese baccalaureate. The schools, especially the public ones, will not be 'left alone' in the elaboration of this programme. Actually, the government will financially help them; and it is precisely towards this goal that a financial measure, similar to the one proposed by Emile Lahoud Jr. and François Saadé, could find its utility³³⁰. Indeed, if half of the 1% of the money coming from alcohol and tobacco (around \$9 Millions a year) is used to help the new schools build indoor sport facilities, this policy will be applied very successfully.

There are many reasons to believe that the implementation of PES as a subject in the Lebanese Baccalaureate will bring a massive contribution towards the development of sport in the country. The effects could even be relatively stronger than those occurred in France following Herzog's strategy³³¹. The Lebanese schools that have adopted the French baccalaureate are: 'Notre-Dame of Jamhour', 'Frères Mont-La-Salle', 'Frères Maristes Champville', 'College Protestant', 'Grand Lycée Franco-Libanais', 'Frères Aintoura'... These schools have elaborated syllabus for PES, adaptable to all the classes (pre-school, elementary, middle school, high-school); a program that is set to go and follow the physiological development of the

³³⁰ See interview with the Lebanese Judo Federation President François Saade, done in May 2003, in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon.

³³¹ See Jean-Paul Callède article, 'Les politiques du sport en France', *L'Année Sociologique*, 2002, 52, n.2, p.437 to p.457 [In French].

body³³². The establishment of PES as a subject in the Lebanese Baccalaureate will surely 'push' the Lebanese schools to set-up a curriculum for sport adequate to the different levels of school education. If half of the 16000 to 20000 students³³³ (supposing that half of the students will choose PES as an option) who pass the Lebanese Baccalaureate exam every year are assessed a PES test, over a period of 10 years, we will potentially have the sum of 80000 students that have followed a PES curriculum in their education. This number is more than 5 times higher than the only 15000 resulting from 10 years of French Baccalaureate exams³³⁴. This will develop the sport culture in all the Lebanese schools, considering that they all follow the Lebanese baccalaureate. These educational establishments will be then much more 'equipped' to participate in competitive sports. This will consequently establish favourable conditions to finally³³⁵ create the Lebanese School Sport Federation that will encompass all schools from the different areas of the country. So, the first main advantage obtained by this policy is the number multiplication in terms of mass and youth male and female participation. The second advantage that is expected to be obtained is that, by developing a sport culture in the different Lebanese regions, it will create the opportunities to promote competitive sport in

³³² - Oral interview with Georges Habeyeb, head of physical education in the Notre-Dame of Jamhour school, done in March 2007.

- Oral interview done in June 2007 with M.Jihad Salamé, the person behind the file against Lebanese corruption that he will submit as a National Director Course in 2005 to the International Olympic Committee in Lausanne [In French].

- Oral interview with ski athlete Cesar Keyrouz done in February 2003.

- Oral interview with Pavla Riga, administrator at College Protestant, done in September 2006.

- Oral interview with Robert Younes, PES teacher at Grand Lycée Franco-Libanais, done in May 2007.

- Oral interview with Elie Chalhoub, head of physical education department at the 'Frères Ain-Toura' school, done in May 2007.

³³³ Oral interview done in February 2008 with Najwa Fuleihan, Lebanese Ministry of Education advisor.

³³⁴ Oral interview done in February 2008 with Guy Sabatier, French Embassy in Lebanon employee.

³³⁵ See Joseph Sacre 1990 official report to the Lebanese Government [In French].

the different provinces and therefore lead to the rupture of the centralisation that monopolose sport in the country.

Schools that follow the French Baccalaureate have all developed a club structure in their organization, and have been major forces in several sport disciplines on the Lebanese scene (athletics, tae kwon do, dance, basketball, table tennis)³³⁶. As stated before, with the introduction of PES in the Lebanese curriculum, many schools from the different regions will be likely to develop a similar structure, compete on the Lebanese scene and therefore reduce the country's sport centralisation. The development of schools competitions can also lead to the decline of sectarianism within the Lebanese society. Actually, the war's effects are still strongly felt: in the Lebanese educational programme, the history books don't mention or elaborate on the beginning of the 1975 conflict³³⁷. Talking about the war is still taboo. It is still a sensitive issue, showing the lack of true reconciliation between the Lebanese people. This differentiation and separation are also found in sport³³⁸ where each federation belongs to a certain community. With the current situation of Lebanese sport, youth will tend to go to a sport where they will play with persons of their own communities. With competitions opposing schools from all over the country, sport will reach students from all the religious groups. Youth will learn to compete with and against each other in a neutralized environment; sport could be a vector that would encourage national coexistence that would, hopefully, lead to a future 'true' reconciliation among all the Lebanese religious communities.

³³⁶ See : '*Al Nahar*' Newspaper 2004 archives [In Arabic].

³³⁷ Oral interview done in February 2008 with Najwa Fuleihan, Lebanese Ministry of Education advisor.

³³⁸ See the interview done to the person in charge of squash in 'The escape' club Georges El-Hajj in February 2003 in Beirut, Lebanon.

One of the major contributions that this measure will also bring is towards the development of coaching diplomas and graduate PES related programmes. Indeed, the establishment of PES as a subject in the schools curriculum and the development of school teams will create an unprecedented demand of PES teachers and coaches. This will ‘force’ all the different universities (apart from those that already have a PES programme: The University of Balamand, the Lebanese University, the Antonine University and Notre-Dame University) to develop PES related programme and therefore to inflate the very low number of PES students in the country³³⁹. It will also create the conditions for the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports to establish the much-needed coaching diplomas programmes³⁴⁰. The increase in the number of aspiring physical educators and coaches will also create the need for the universities to promote different PES related sections and research programmes such as sport physiology, biomechanics, nutrition, motor function and management. While all the different sport science programmes will have a considerable impact on the improvement of the training, coaching and performance standards, sport management studies will give to the Lebanese sport community a very much needed asset: PES graduates having managerial skills, students knowing at the same time sport science fundamentals and business principles. This kind of students will be the most apt to run the different Lebanese associations and federations away from the prevailing corruption. In another word, although there is no proper scientific approach to stop the corruption, considering that it strongly

³³⁹ See registration offices 2004 list of the PES students of the University of Balamand, Antonine University, Lebanese University and Notre-Dame University.

³⁴⁰ See report done in the year 2005 under the protocol of the cooperation between the French embassy and the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports made by Henri-Pierre Gazzeri et Jean-François Isnard concerning the valuation mission for the implementation of coaching programmes. [In French]

depends on the ethics of the person in authority, the development of sport management programmes will send to the market PES graduate that have the ‘know-how’ of sport organisation that will reduce the impact of this cancer of Lebanese sport³⁴¹. Even if persons will still be placed in the different federations because they represent a given political party, the latter, with the development of sport management programmes, will at least have the opportunity to put ‘sportly’ competent people inside the federations. We will then probably find a remedy to the Lebanese elite athletes lassitude revealed in their different expressions: ‘Deficient management, ‘lack of support’, ‘lack of support’, lack of professionalism’ and ‘corruption’³⁴².

Actually, this whole strategy led by the implementation of PES in the Lebanese curriculum is not supposed to find a fast and easy solution to the difficulties found by the different elite athletes and federations. It will in fact create a mechanism that will improve the conditions for the next generation of people that will take part in the Lebanese sport movement. We shouldn’t think that the moment this procedure is implemented, a direct ‘cure’ to the problems of Lebanese sport will be acquired. The 0.4% of the government budget at the disposal of the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports, and which is barely enough to finance the internal functioning of the Ministry itself³⁴³, cannot be used to develop mass participation or the elite

³⁴¹ Oral interview done in June 2007 with M.Jihad Salamé, the person behind the file against Lebanese corruption that he will submit as a National Director Course in 2005 to the International Olympic Committee in Lausanne.

³⁴² See interviews done with the different Lebanese sport athletes from February to September 2003 in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

³⁴³ See report done in the year 2005 under the protocol of the cooperation between the French Embassy and the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports, written by Henri-Pierre Gazzeri et Jean-François Isnard concerning the valuation mission for the implementation of coaching programmes.

athletes' standards. With a small number of persons participating in the sport movement, the number of fans will consequently remain poor and therefore most of the disciplines will not entice potential private sponsors and media agents. The casual donations offered to the different federations³⁴⁴ will not improve the international results obtained by the Lebanese athletes, and will not be an asset to the development of mass participation and fan base. The idea is to propose a policy based on the development of physical education and sport that will, on the long run, enlarge the size of the Lebanese sport movement by significantly increasing the number of its different agents: licensees, coaches, physical education teachers, managers, researchers, elite athletes and fans. The goal is to take Lebanese sport out of the vicious circle caused by the low number of participants. The mechanism desired will offer to the different sport federations more qualified athletes, coaches and administrators. It is expected that by the end of this policy's first decade, the participants number will be higher, the standards better, and the fan base consequently larger. The federations will then have much greater opportunities to attract sponsors, gain higher revenues and hire full-time employees to improve the quality of their work. So, instead of remaining in the continuous Lebanese sport vicious circle³⁴⁵, the establishment of PES as a Lebanese Baccalaureate subject will instead create a positive mechanism³⁴⁶.

However, problematic questions concerning the transfer process of the athletes from the 'new youth system' to the Lebanese senior competitive structure still remain. Is the country's elite competitive scene, represented in the top clubs, large

³⁴⁴ See interviews with different Lebanese heads of federation,s from February to September 2003, in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

³⁴⁵ See Table 16 of the Appendix.

³⁴⁶ See Table 17 of the Appendix.

and rich enough to ‘absorb’ adequately this additional quantity of promising talents? In other terms, will the best young-school-graduate sportsmen, find a place where they can play at the highest stage? Will not all the advantages offered by the school sport system not be wasted by the financial and material incapacity of the elite structure to benefit from them?

Actually, the current situation of Lebanese sport, entrenched with difficulties and where athletes and different sport bodies do their best to generate substantial sources of revenues³⁴⁷, does not offer any sign of future prospects for any young student willing to obtain a financial profit from playing competitive sport. Simply speaking, as it stands today, there is no room for professional or semi-professional sport in Lebanon to encourage young sportsmen to pursue an athletic career. So, why develop a structure that will be ‘short-circuited’ by a mis-functioning at its top? Effectively, the ‘dead-end’ expected at the pinnacle of the pyramid is too obvious if we look at the status of sport in the country nowadays (2004). However, the conditions might drastically change with the new configuration of Lebanese sport launched by the implementation of PES as a Lebanese baccalaureate subject. Indeed, with the increase in the number of the schools’ club structures resulting from the higher involvement of these educational establishments in the Lebanese school competition (the phenomenon mentioned above that have created the conditions for ‘French Baccalaureate’ schools like ‘Notre-Dame of Jamhour’, ‘Frères Mont-La-Salle’ and ‘Frères Maristes Champville’ to develop a club structure in their organisation), they will be more ‘places’ available for the ‘athletic’ students to participate in elite sport. And with the enlargement of the

³⁴⁷ See interviews done to different Lebanese heads of federations from February to September 2003, in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

potential fan base, the country's top clubs, the 'old' (those which are already in place) and the 'new' (those expected to be formed with the establishment of this structure) ones will have much more opportunities to benefit from larger revenues, and hence provide their future athletes better financial conditions. More importantly, the new structure in place will bring much more efficiently to the table a considerable and unavoidable pillar of any sport system: the universities.

Apart from offering to the Lebanese sport structure PES teachers, coaches³⁴⁸, managers, researchers and other specialists of this field, indispensable for the standards of the different disciplines and for the good functioning of this system, the universities could also play a major in competitive sports. In fact, many of the leading Lebanese universities, American University of Beirut (AUB), Notre-Dame University (NDU), Lebanese American University (LAU), University of Balamand (UOB), Lebanese State University (UL), St. Joseph University (USJ), the Antonine University (UPA), the Beirut Arab University (BAU), the Université Saint-Esprit Kaslik (USEK) and the American University of Science & Technology (AUST)³⁴⁹, provide equal and sometimes bigger sport facilities than those provided at the

³⁴⁸ See report done in the year 2005 under the protocol of the cooperation between the French Embassy and the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports made by Henri-Pierre Gazzeri et Jean-François Isnard concerning the valuation mission for the implementation of coaching programmes. Gazzeri and Isnard have proposed the elaboration of coaching programmes in the different Lebanese universities [In French].

³⁴⁹ See : - American University of Beirut (AUB) 2003-2004 catalogue.
 - Notre-Dame University (NDU) 2003-2004 catalogue.
 - Lebanese American University (LAU) 2003-2004 catalogue.
 - University of Balamand (UOB) 2003-2004 catalogue.
 - Lebanese University (UL) 2003-2004 catalogue [In Arabic].
 - St. Joseph University (USJ) 2003-2004 catalogue [In French].
 - Antonine University (UPA) 2003-2004 catalogue [In French].
 - Beirut Arab University (BAU) 2003-2004 catalogue [In Arabic].
 - Kaslik University (USEK) 2003-2004 catalogue.
 - American University of Science & Technology (AUST) 2003-2004 catalogue.

country's elite clubs. This fact was clearly understood by Dany Kazandjian, the founder of the Lebanese Rugby League Foundation (LRLF) in 2002. For Kazandjian, the implementation of a sport requiring the complex infrastructure of rugby league (Football-size pitch, 13 players on the field, 30 in total for each squad) in Lebanon could only be made in the Lebanese universities. Based on this point, he launched the development plan of this sport. With the agreement of the universities' administrations, Kazandjian intends to create a club structure for each of these educational establishments to participate in a future official Lebanese championship³⁵⁰. Actually, the universities' sport teams used to participate in Lebanese university competitions under the aegis of the Lebanese University Sport Federation³⁵¹ and therefore, could not have a direct impact on the country's official national competition. Kazandjian's idea opens a new era for the Lebanese sports. The latter could then benefit from the large human and financial resources offered by the universities, and would enable them to compete in the different sports, along the country's elite clubs. This strategy is also similar to the one proposed in this work that is based on the establishment of PES as a Lebanese baccalaureate subject. Hence, the high number of 'sportily' educated students (a potential of 16 to 20000 students³⁵² each year) created by this new Lebanese sport structure will, after graduating from high-school, go to the different universities, soaked with a much stronger sport culture. The sport 'values' taught at the schools of the different Lebanese regions, will, therefore, be 'transferred' to the different universities, that will then be much more enthusiast and prepared to participate in universities

³⁵⁰ Oral interview with Danny Kazandjian, the President of the Lebanese Rugby League's Foundation, done in September 2003.

³⁵¹ See Joseph Sacre 1990 official report to the Lebanese Government [In French].

³⁵² Oral interview with Lebanese Ministry of Education advisor, Najwa Fuleihan, done in February 2008.

championships; and later on, if they start applying Kazandjian ‘strategy’, would participate, as official clubs, in the different national official championships.

The sport policy model proposed in this work could be a Lebanese mixture of Francophone and Anglo-Saxon (New Zealand, Australia and more importantly the United States, where the universities are a springboard for professional sport) sport models. From France, it takes the school PES programme and the official governmental structure for sport (Ministry of Youth and Sports, federations and associations³⁵³). From the Anglo-Saxon countries, it will have the major contribution of the schools and universities in the competitive sport system, with the difference that, in Lebanon, given the country’s characteristics, these educational establishments will not only be the passage to sport’s higher stage, but actors in the nation’s elite competitive sport scene. As it was said before, when put in place, this mechanism will take about 10 years to ‘mature’. At the end of this decade, Lebanese sport will be ‘provided’ with more participants, clubs, fans, elite athletes, elite teams, coaches, PES teachers, sport specialists, media coverage, sponsors and revenues, indispensable for its growth and its ability to improve its standards. Once this is done, the next step (another 5 to 10 years) will be devoted to the implementation of measures and programmes that will refine and improve the quality of Lebanon’s elite sport and put it on the world’s sport map. The emergence of Lebanon in international sport has a vital importance for the country’s sport movement. Actually, the enlargement of the different components of this movement (number of participants, clubs, fans, elite athletes, elites teams, coaches...) will certainly improve Lebanon’s regional results in minor events like

³⁵³ See Joseph Sacre 1990 official report to the Lebanese Government [In French].

the Arab Games, but it could find itself insufficient if Lebanon wants to obtain a significant success in international sport, defined by regular medal or qualifications ‘tickets’ to major events such as the Olympics or major sports world championships (‘popular’ team sports like basketball, football or volleyball). To achieve the international standards, Lebanon has to be able to compete against countries having complex and elaborated elite sport programmes. A large number of participants would not be enough, especially considering the fact that even if the Lebanese sport movement is able to draw a significant number of athletes, this number will still be low compared to other countries, given the small population of Lebanon (3432000 millions inhabitants, ranked 123rd in the world in terms of population³⁵⁴.) What is needed here is to put the elite athletes, the top of those graduating from schools, with the best conditions to compete. This means financial advantages and adequate time to train properly. For the sports able to generate big revenues, measures should be taken to implement a true professionalism and avoid ‘shamateurism’, a condition that would place the athletes totally under the hands of the clubs’ presidents (the details of this procedure come under the jurisdiction of sport law and therefore will not be discussed in this work.) For the sports that are unable to collect money, the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Lebanese Ministry of Education should establish an official convention, where will be written the list of the elite athletes. By elite athlete, we mean any Lebanese sportsman that has the potential to be selected for the national team. All the persons whose names are written on the list should be backed by both the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Lebanese Ministry of Education, and to present them with an opportunity to have flexible timetables in order to cope with both their training and studies; in addition to the financial aid towards their tuitions

³⁵⁴ See United Nations official website, 2004 statistics on Lebanon.

fees (the percentage of this aid will vary according to the ranking of this athlete in the federation and to the chance expected by the latter to see him achieve an international success).

Where will the money come from? These funds provided by the government could be collected, thanks to measures similar to the ‘alcohol and tobacco’ one proposed by Emile Lahoud Jr. and François Saade³⁵⁵. Providing the top athletes with the best conditions to pursue both their studies and their athletic career is an essential step in any system of elite sport performance, whether it is in developed or under developing countries, or whether it concerns a ‘rich’ or ‘poor’ discipline. As it was said above, all the top sport countries of the 20th have adopted this strategy in a certain way:

- Total state-interventionist countries like the Soviet Union with their sport schools, where gifted athletes are put in a specific sport school, in which they will train full-time in their respective sport, besides attending to their regular education³⁵⁶.
- Liberal countries like the United States of America with their collegiate system, in which the student-athletes obtain half or full scholarship to pursue their athletic career along with their studies.

³⁵⁵ See interview with the Lebanese Judo Federation President François Saade, done in May 2003, in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon.

³⁵⁶ See J.Riordan, *Soviet Sport* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980).

- Countries mixing liberal and state-interventionist economy like France with their ‘sport-études’ programme³⁵⁷, where the athletes are able to conciliate high-level competition with the French baccalaureate.

Actually, coordinating high standards physical performance with an adapted academic programme is an unavoidable step to develop elite sport today. Indeed, becoming a professional or an international-level athlete requires a great deal of talent, years of hard-work and a good ‘share’ of luck (some athletes waste their whole career because of an injury). Many young sportsmen try to reach the pinnacle of their sport, but very few succeed. In the United States of America, it is estimated that approximately 0.03% of high school boys playing basketball will be eventually drafted by a NBA (National Basketball Association) team; 0.02% of the high school girls playing basketball will be drafted by a WNBA (Women National Basketball Association) team; 0.08% of the high-school boys playing American football will reach the NFL (National Football League); and 0.45% of the high-school baseball players will get to the MLB (Major League Baseball). In short, an athletic career is very short³⁵⁸. The average professional sportsman retires from his sport at the age of 33. So, very few athletes of some sports (apart from the ‘rich’ sports – Football, basketball, American football - many world champions of their disciplines are still amateurs or ‘part-time’ sportsmen³⁵⁹) will actually earn in their sport career, enough money to be able to live their whole life without doing anything besides. It is therefore essential for all the sportsmen, trying to get to the top of their sport, not to invest all their time and effort to obtain something most of

³⁵⁷ See INSEP official website. ‘Sport-études’ programme [In French].

³⁵⁸ See NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) official website statistics.

³⁵⁹ See French Ministry of Youth and Sports official website, status of the elite athletes (‘Statut des athlètes de haut-niveau’), France [In French].

them will never have, and this, by neglecting other options for their professional life. That is why all of the governments should implement a structure or a programme for their top athletes, where they will be helped in their studies in terms of timetable and scholarship. For, apart from giving them a financial aid for their tuition fees, all the different agents (schools, universities, coaches, clubs, federations, government) should ‘officially’ coordinate to fix their schedule to permit these athletes to cope both with their educational curriculum and their training. This must include allowance for absences, after-school classes (if necessary) and special dates for the exams. These measures will psychologically and physically release the athletes by decreasing the amount of pressure they have to support going through education and sport. They will be able to dedicate themselves to their practice without feeling, that in case they did not succeed in their sport, they will not have any other professional opportunity. In Lebanon, this strategy, which will start with the elaboration of the official elite athletes list by the government, will have a vital importance. The education curriculum in Lebanon is extremely restricting; it has all the subjects of the French baccalaureate in addition to the different Arabic subjects (Arabic language, history, geography and philosophy)³⁶⁰. From middle to high school, the students stay in school around 35 to 40 hours every week. They are also given an extensive amount of homework. This programme is too hectic for a young sportsman who is supposed to train at least 2 hours a day in his adolescence³⁶¹. An official planning of his schedule by the government and by the different sporting authorities is considerably required if he wants to handle the pressure caused by the requirements of his joint academic and athletic careers. This list, from the leading sport authorities, will ‘protect’ the

³⁶⁰ - Oral interview with Lebanese Ministry of Education advisor Najwa Fuleihan, done in February 2008.

³⁶¹ See INSEP official website, ‘training routines’ [In French].

interests of the Lebanese elite sportsmen. It will, more importantly, provide the conditions and open the door for another essential step in the development and improvement of the country's international results: the inauguration of a national centre of sport excellence and performance. This structure, similar to France's INSEP, will regroup the Lebanese elite sportsmen, coaches and researchers to offer them optimal conditions of performance. The first step to be undertaken then is the creation of a sport-education school where the first objective is the success of the coordination between the regular academic curriculum and the high-level sport programme. The main investment must first be oriented towards the facilities and on the personnel. Here again, the finance of this organisation will be provided by measures similar to the 'alcohol and tobacco' one proposed by Emile Lahoud Jr. and François Saadé³⁶². The 'hardware' includes a school, dormitories, indoor sport arena and a sport laboratory. The staff has to be made of academic teachers, researchers, doctors, physiotherapists, psychologists and coaches. Apart from offering the athletes the best training conditions, the other main advantage of this structure is to put them in a place where they will be able to combine all their duties, academic and athletic, without wasting the time and effort on covering the distance between their home, school and the place of their training. The first year of the implementation of this structure should be consecrated to a feasibility study agenda and budget that includes contacts with similar organisations of other countries, host of foreign expert delegations, recruitment of permanent and visiting personnel, selection of site, ordering equipment and the setting of administration and hierarchy with rules organisation chart³⁶³.

³⁶² See interview with the Lebanese Judo Federation President François Saadé; done in May 2003, in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon.

³⁶³ See Table 18 of the Appendix.

After a first year of studies, the second year will be given over to the establishment of the centre. The first period of this project is a trial. The priority, as it was mentioned earlier, is to succeed in the coordination between the athletes training and studies. Therefore, costs should be reduced by, at the launching of this programme launch, the choice of inexpensive sports (individual disciplines not requiring massive investment) that have also a considerable degree of popularity in Lebanon. The degree of this sport popularity will be measured with the number of students taking part in this discipline's school competition. The choice of popular sports is also very important to 'exercise' the scouting system of this centre of sport performance, which will implement a severe selection to constitute the country's elite sportsmen. Once the coordination between sport and education is established, other sports will be included in the programme. It will take about 5 years for this institution to perfect the sport-studies system, and 5 others to 'gather' all the other sports played in Lebanon. In the decade following the 10 years of the inauguration of the centre, Lebanese sport is supposed to meet international success, characterised by the qualification of the country to most of the major world championships, most of the Olympics disciplines and the winning of some medals in those international events (winning as much medals as a 4 millions inhabitants country like Croatia – 5 in the 2004 Athens Summer Olympic Games and 4 in the Salt Lake City Winter Games- would be ideal). Those successes will develop the already enlarged mass participation, fan base, and reinforce the sense of national identity, which will also reduce the country's sectarianism³⁶⁴.

³⁶⁴ See Pierre Blanc article, 'Le sport au Liban: un révélateur de la société', Les Cahiers de Confluence, Chapter 15, pp.159-161 [In French].

So, after analysing the country's sport characteristics and the identification of the difficulties and strengths, the proposed plan for development will, in the first decade, develop PES in the schools by implementing it as an optional subject in the Lebanese Baccalaureate. This will develop mass participation, fan base and the different sport disciplines standards. The next decade will be consecrated to the improvement of the elite structure, with the offer of financial aids to the top Lebanese sportsmen to help them pursue their studies; the implementation by the government of an official list that will 'protect' these athletes' status and manage their timetable and the elaboration of the centre of sport excellence to optimise their preparation for the major international sport events. The third decade will then mark the beginning of Lebanon's international success and the strengthening of the mass participation, fan base and sense of national identity³⁶⁵.

It will take about 30 years to properly develop Lebanese sport and put in on the 'map' of the sporting world. It will require joint decision, patience and long-term policy from the country's main sport organisations. It took 20 years for a world economic power like France, since the decision taken by Herzog in the beginning of the 60's to implement PES as a school compulsory subject³⁶⁶, to achieve international sport success. Of course, these measures, taken alone are not enough to develop Lebanese sport. Indeed, as Herzog policy was followed by Mazeau, Avice and Bambuck strategies that reorganised, decentralised and improved the conditions and ethics of French sport³⁶⁷, the policy proposed in this work, based on

³⁶⁵ See Table 19 of the Appendix.

³⁶⁶ See Jean-Paul Callède article, 'Les politiques du sport en France', L'Année Sociologique, 2002, 52, n.2, p.437 to p.457. [In French]

³⁶⁷ See Jean-Paul Callède article, 'Les politiques du sport en France', L'Année Sociologique, 2002, 52, n.2, p.437 to p.457. [In French]

the development of sport through the system of education, should also be relayed by procedures that will set the laws that will regulate and improve the functioning of the Lebanese sport system; and hence reduce corruption³⁶⁸. For the sports to become capable of generating a sufficient amount of money to pay the athletes a monthly income (basketball, football and volleyball), measures should be also taken to implement professionalism and protect those sportsmen from the insecurity related to their current semi-professional or 'shamateur' situation³⁶⁹. But those actions remain under the jurisdiction of sport law and will therefore not be dealt with in this work. But perhaps the development of sport-related university programmes will open the door for university masters of sports law and will form specialists capable of furnishing answers to these prevailing issues.

Conclusion

³⁶⁸ See : - Interview with the Lebanese Volleyball Federation General Secretary Wallid Younes in June 2003 in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon.

- Oral interview done in June 2007 with Jihad Salame, the person behind the anti-corruption document sent to the International Olympic Committee in Lausanne.

³⁶⁹ See interviews with volleyball and football athletes Elie Abi Chedid and Hassan Ayoub done in March and May 2003, in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

A sport victory has short-term effects on a country's situation. The feeling of ecstasy and unity that a person feels when his nation wins in a major sport event can be overwhelming, but is quickly forgotten; especially, when the nation in question is facing economical difficulties and strong political pressure. However, a long-term sport programme targeting the whole population and giving consistent results in several sports will undoubtedly have a strong and steady positive effect on a country's identity and economy. It is perhaps this fact that is between the difference between Lebanon and other 'troubled' places like South Africa, Ireland and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

South Africa has suffered 30 years of political isolation. The apartheid regime, based on racial segregation of South Africa's ethnic communities, black and white, was established in 1948, with the election of the Nationalist Government. This regime first started to crumble in the early 1990s. Between the end of the 60's and the beginning of the 90's, South Africa was actually boycotted by almost all the sport world. After the fall of the Apartheid regime, it was mainly through sports that South Africa showed its new face of social harmony and equality. The country organised the 1996 Rugby World Cup and won it³⁷⁰, qualified for the 1998 and 2002 Football World Cup³⁷¹ and organised the 2003 Cricket World Cup³⁷². In 2004, they won the bid to organise the 2010 Football World Cup³⁷³. Those successes were not obtained in one day, and the hosting of these major events was certainly not a

³⁷⁰ See International Rugby Board (IRB) official website, archives of the 1996 IRB World Cup.

³⁷¹ See International Football Federation (FIFA) official website, archives of the 1998 and 2002 Football World Cups.

³⁷² See International Cricket Council (ICC) official website, archives of 2003 Cricket World Cup.

³⁷³ See International Football Federation (FIFA) official website, '2010 FIFA World Cup'.

‘gift’ offered by FIFA, the IRB or even the ICC to South Africa. Those international ‘major’ sport federations have chosen South Africa because they ‘believed’ in their sport fan base potentials. According to the 2001 census, South Africa has a population of 44.8 millions inhabitants³⁷⁴. In addition to being large (South Africa’s population exceeds that of a major European powerhouse like Spain, 40 millions³⁷⁵), South African population is characterised by its passion for sports. ‘Sport is the national religion’, a South African Government’s motto³⁷⁶. South Africa is the home of world-class sporting facilities capable of accommodating tens of thousands of spectators in comfort, such as the Newlands Grounds (nestled at the foot of Cape Town’s mountains), the Wanderers Cricket Grounds in Johannesburg, Johannesburg’s Ellis Park, Pretoria’s Loftus Versfeld and the Durban’s Kings Park. As proof of this infatuation for sport, there are more than eight South African television channels exclusively dedicated to sports³⁷⁷. This strong fan base, resulting from a large mass participation, was the main components behind South Africa’s sport success that brought to this country victories in international competitions (rugby, golf³⁷⁸, boxing³⁷⁹) and gave it the ‘calibre’ to host major sport events. The difference between South Africa and Lebanon is that South Africa already has a regular sport mechanism, capable of unifying its society and bringing its people together. Sport institutions in Lebanon have not yet either the size or the power to create an equivalent national identity.

³⁷⁴ See United Nations (U.N) official website.

³⁷⁵ See United Nations (U.N) official website.

³⁷⁶ See South Africa Government official website.

³⁷⁷ See SuperSport official website. There are eight SuperSport channels.

³⁷⁸ South Africa has produced some of the best golfers (Bobby Locke, Gary Player, Ernie Els, Retief Goosen).

³⁷⁹ 35 South African fighters have won 49 world boxing titles.

The political division of Ireland took place in 1921, when, after centuries of British rule, including 120 years when the country was governed as part of the United Kingdom, 26 of the 32 counties of Ireland gained independence. The other six remained in political union with Britain as Northern Ireland. From 1921 to 1972, an elected government in Northern Ireland was to operate, from London, with virtual autonomy from London on local matters³⁸⁰. Power remained exclusively in the hands of the Unionist Party. The Nationalist community had no role in government, and suffered systematic discrimination in many areas including voting rights, housing and employment. The 1970s saw a revival of paramilitary conflict between the IRA (Irish Republican Army, Catholics) and extreme Loyalist groups (Protestants). From the early 1980s the Irish and British Governments began to co-operate in an effort to achieve a widely acceptable and durable political resolution to close-up the Northern-Ireland conflict. On Friday 10 April 1999, a comprehensive agreement was reached between the parties, containing provisions for constitutional change and new political structure in Northern Ireland, between Ireland North and South and between Britain and Ireland. In their history, Northern or Southern, the Irish always intended to show their autonomy and their difference from the United Kingdom. This aspect is strongly reflected in sport; especially, through the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA). Through the GAA, the Nationalist communities created their own sports, known as the Gaelic Games. These sports - Hurling, Gaelic Football and Handball- are among the most popular in the Irish society. They also took an 'economical' path that separates them from the one taken by the British. The athletes playing these sports are all amateurs and compete only for the pride and honor of their villages and towns. Sport has undoubtedly strengthened the Irish sense of belonging and identity. Irish people are proud of

³⁸⁰ See Mike Cronin, Sport And Nationalism In Ireland: Gaelic Games, Soccer And Identity Since 1884 (Dublin: Four Counts Press, 1999).

their Gaelic Games, football and rugby national teams. This passion for sport has been channeled and structured when, the Irish National Coaching and Training Centre (NCTC), was founded in April 1992³⁸¹. This institution's mission is to 'provide a world class range of services to national governing bodies, coaches, players and athletes, thereby strengthening the base and extending the peak in Irish sport'. In other words, this organisation was founded to create a long-term, strong and regular sport mechanism. As in South Africa, Irish sport had an inherent capacity to impact the social and economic situation of this country.

Bosnia-Herzegovina is one of the several small countries that emerged from the break-up of Yugoslavia, a multicultural country created after World War I by the victorious Western Allies. Yugoslavia was composed of ethnic and religious groups that had been historical rivals, even bitter enemies, including the Serbs (Orthodox Christians), Croats (Catholics) and Albanians (Muslims). In 1990, this break up of Yugoslavia that split into several republics (Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Slovenia) produced severe ethnic tensions. In the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, conflict between these three main ethnic groups resulted in a genocide committed by the Serbs against the Muslims in Bosnia. After the end of the war, in 1996, the independence of Bosnia-Herzegovina was declared. This country is a federation of 2 republics: one Serbian (Orthodox Christian) and one Bosnian-Croat (Muslims and Catholics). It is difficult to talk about the role of sport inside Bosnia-Herzegovina, given the short time since the end of the conflict. However, an article published in *Sport Illustrated* magazine³⁸², written in 1996, has shown how politics has driven apart the Bosnian, Croat and Serb 'stars' of the

³⁸¹ Oral interview with Dr. Pat Duffy, a high NCTC official in December 2002.

³⁸² See 'Sport Illustrated' 1996 archives, 'Prisoners of War' article.

National Basketball Association (NBA), who 9 years earlier, had all been part of the Yugoslavian Junior Team that beat the United States in the Basketball Junior World Championship. The tension manifested during the football games between the Republic of Serbia and Montenegro and the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina shows how sport still reflects the climate of ‘bad blood’ between the Serbians and the Bosnians³⁸³. Scarcely has a decade passed by since the creation of this ‘unstable state’ that tension was not manifested in one way or another. As mentioned above, it is too early to talk about the position of sport in Bosnian society, and to compare it with that of Lebanon. But, like Croatia and Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina has inherited a sport structure and culture from the former Yugoslavia³⁸⁴, where a school cannot have an official permit to open if it does not have indoor sport facilities, and an academic programme that requires every student to have a speciality in sport. Yugoslavia is undoubtedly one of the strongest ‘team sports countries in sport history. It has been world champions in handball³⁸⁵, basketball³⁸⁶ and water polo³⁸⁷. They also won a gold medal in the 1960 Olympic Football tournament³⁸⁸. Bosnia-Herzegovina can still count on these inherited infrastructures to develop a sport mechanism that will act as a vector of social peace and stability and turn this young nation into a ‘modern sport country’.

³⁸³ See International Football Federation (FIFA) official website 2005 archives, World Cup qualifiers (5 July 2005 Serbia vs Bosnia-Herzegovina, 12 October 2005 Bosnia-Herzegovina vs Serbia).

³⁸⁴ Oral interview with Mico Martić, Croatian national team futsal coach, done in November 2004.

³⁸⁵ See International Handball Federation (IHF) official website, 1986 Men World Championships archives.

³⁸⁶ See International Basketball Federation (FIBA) official website. Yugoslavia has won the Basketball World Championship in 1970, 1978 and 1990.

³⁸⁷ See International Swimming Federation (FINA) official website. Yugoslavia has won the Water Polo World Championship in 1986 and 1991.

³⁸⁸ See International Olympic Committee (IOC) official website, Rome 1960 Olympic Games archives.

Without any doubt, Lebanon has a lot of similarities with South Africa, Ireland and Bosnia-Herzegovina in terms of political, ethnic and religious history. Each country had or still does have divisions between its religious or ethnic groups. In these four countries, sport had at a certain point reflected that tension, and at other times worked toward their 'unity'. However, the main difference between Lebanon and the three other 'places' is the inability of Lebanese sport to provide a mechanism able to develop a long-term programme. Sport in Lebanon takes up a small part in the culture of its society³⁸⁹. Physical Education is not yet considered a 'real' subject; the country has a very small infrastructure, and a sport policy. So, to what group of countries does Lebanon belong in terms of sport system? Do we not have other places in the world where the sport community has the same criteria? Is Lebanon special, or even, unique?

For sport sociologists and economists, there are three main sport systems recognised in the world³⁹⁰:

- The first, exists in the communist countries, where the totality of the sport movement (amateur and elite) is 'held' by the government. As is the case in China, Cuba and the former 'Eastern Bloc' countries (Soviet Union, East-Germany and all the East Europe countries before 1990).

³⁸⁹ - See Pierre Blanc article, 'Le sport au Liban: un révélateur de la société', 'Les Cahiers de Confluences', Chapitre 15, pp. 159-161 [In French]

³⁹⁰ See Patrick Bouchet and Mohammad Kaach article, 'Existe-t-il un « modèle sportif » dans les pays africains francophones ?' STAPS revue N.65 [In French]

- The second is found in the liberal countries, where private initiative is encouraged, and where the government 'bequeaths' all of its power to the sport movement. As is the case of the United States of America, Canada, Germany and Italy.
- The third that is found in the semi-liberal countries like France, proposes a mixture of 'controlled' and 'free' economy, where though sport is controlled by the government, the different agents of the sport movement are granted some 'freedom' of movement.

The last one mentioned seems to theoretically fit with the Lebanese sport model. It was actually under the French mandate that the first sport federation, the Lebanese Football Federation, was created (1933)³⁹¹. And like most of the French post-colonialist countries, Lebanon has established a French model sport structure³⁹². These countries (such as Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Senegal, Benin, Congo, Cameroun...³⁹³) have a similar structure: a sport club, national federations, a National Olympic Committee, a school federation, a university federation, a military federation and a Ministry of Youth and Sports, or another governmental organisation responsible for conceiving, coordinating and controlling the country's sport policy. In this system, the government, through the Youth and Sports body,

³⁹¹ See Interview to the Lebanese Football Federation General Director Joseph Moawad done in September 2003 in Beirut, Lebanon.

³⁹² See: - Chifflet and Gouda article, 'Olympisme et identité en Afrique Noire Francophone' STAPS scientific revue N.41, France and Benin, 1996 [In French].

- Interviews to different Lebanese sport persons done from February to September 2003 in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

³⁹³ See Patrick Bouchet and Mohammad Kaach article, 'Existe-t-il un « modèle sportif » dans les pays africains francophones ?' STAPS revue N.65 [In French]. Those 7 countries where the only countries francophone countries mentioned in this work, because they were the only ones that have been the 'object' of a research concerning their sport organisation model.

delegates its decision-making powers to the national federations. The latter are then responsible for the regulation and promotion of their discipline, the organisation of national championships (between the different clubs) and the representation of these countries in the international competition. As for the National Olympic Committee, it has the function of reassembling the different federations, and representing the country in the regional and Olympic Games. This system is therefore basically based on the government's involvement, that is supposed to establish the 'rules and regulations' of the sport movement (official permit, power to dissolve the different national federations); the offering of infrastructure; and the training of the sport 'specialists' (coaches, PE teachers, researchers, managers). This structure is then 'taken over' by the initiative of the different heads of federations who will use their 'know-how' to try to 'collect' revenues for their federations. Officially and theoretically, Lebanon and all the French post-colonialist countries have the same characteristics as France. Actually, on their attaining independence, all these countries tried to apply the sport structure of their former 'mentors'. The problem is that this modern sport performance system proved to be inadequate for the political, economical and social characteristics of these young countries, as the different governments did not bestow sufficient funding to finance the sport movement; and the different federations' heads were not able to face the new challenges caused by the new era of professional sport that started in the 1980's³⁹⁴. Those persons in charge of the different associations therefore had to depend on a 'poor' government, which will, in return, rely on their part-time (they are almost all volunteers³⁹⁵) and therefore 'insufficient' work. This situation will in turn create a 'weak' mechanism and an

³⁹⁴ See Patrick Bouchet and Mohammad Kaach article, 'Existe-t-il un « modèle sportif » dans les pays africains francophones ?' STAPS revue N.65 [In French]

³⁹⁵ See interviews with different Lebanese sport persons done from February to September 2003 in Beirut and its suburbs, Lebanon.

unclear apparatus³⁹⁶ that will cause passivity, power and personal abuse³⁹⁷, corruption³⁹⁸ and will undoubtedly have repercussions on Lebanon's poor sport results, fan base and mass participation. To all the persons belonging to the Lebanese competitive sport 'family', corruption is probably the biggest problem holding back the development of sport in the country. Hundred of stories are told of the corrupted and unethical behaviour of the Lebanese sport leaders; stories that are on every mouth: athletes, fans or journalists. Although it has been proven that these rumours are not far from the truth, they, however, lack objectivity and therefore cannot be the base of academic research. Logically, the only persons capable of giving information about the management's quality of the Lebanese sport authorities are members or employees of the different sport federations, which are the same people accused of corruption by the country's sport participants. Therefore, when the interviews were conducted with the different federations' heads, it was evident that they would not (or could not, considering their loyalty to their institution) comment on the corruption inside the Lebanese sport institutions. This fact has posed a limitation to the completion of this work, because there is only one reference (the file against Lebanese corruption submitted by Jihad Salamé to the International Olympic Committee in Lausanne) to attest the gravity of this major issue. Perhaps an extended auditing undertaken in the future by the Lebanese Government on the mismanagement of Lebanese sport officials will shed more light on these 'hidden' practices, and will permit the implementation of accurate researches.

³⁹⁶ See interview with the Lebanese Volleyball Federation Wallid Younes done June 2003, in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon.

³⁹⁷ See Joseph Sacre 1990 official report to the Lebanese Government [In French]

³⁹⁸ Oral interview done in June 2007 to M.Jihad Salamé, the person behind the file against Lebanese corruption that he will submit as a National Director Course in 2005 to the International Olympic Committee in Lausanne.

Lebanon is a unique place in terms of sport policy and structure. It is a mixture of the French post-colonialist model in search of identity³⁹⁹ and of a system that mirrors the divisions that disrupt its society like Ireland, South Africa and Bosnia-Herzegovina. These difficulties, hardly found combined in the same place, constitute obstacles that require ‘delicate’ solutions. Sport must be properly implemented at the root of the Lebanese society to be able, in the long run, to create a durable and national sport movement capable of unifying the Lebanese people, and helping them to forget the ‘wounds’ of the past. It is therefore in the schools, the place of the education and formation of the future citizens, where solutions for these problems of sport development must be sought.

This solution although having the potential to succeed, is not infallible. Given the current economical situation of the country, the proposed plan has very little chance of being put into effect in the near future. This prospective development, will only see light if the measures proposed by Emile Lahoud Jr (1% of the money coming from alcohol and tobacco going to sport) is applied by the Lebanese Government. What is the likelihood of this happening? It depends on the government’s global policy. And is it ready to undertake a long-term plan to develop sport in this country? This will probably depend on the ‘good will’ of the country’s ‘leaders’.

The focus of the present research had to have been selective; for there were some aspects of the problems that were only superficially touched on in passing. These

³⁹⁹ See Patrick Bouchet and Mohammad Kaach article, ‘Existe-t-il un « modèle sportif » dans les pays africains francophones ?’ STAPS revue N.65 [In French]

letter points could constitute the basis of further research. One such aspect is the gender, and especially the possible reaction of women to the general plan for sport development. Do women also reflect the cultural characteristics of the societies of these parts of the world? Are they 'ready' for these changes? A second field of investigation might also involve a deeper comparative study between Lebanon and other countries. How did nations, having similarities with Lebanon (like the French post-colonialist countries), implemented plans for development? And what was their rate of success? Thirdly, a more detailed examination of the Lebanese basketball phenomenon, limited by the time and space in this research, could also perhaps provide more ideas, methods and models for the formulation of a future national sport policy. Finally, the present work has predominantly centred on elite sport. Further studies on the development of non-elite sport would be therefore very interesting. This thesis is therefore not an end in itself, but will open the door to a new era of research around the long-time neglected field of sport in Lebanon.

Appendix

The interview tapes are in the possession of the author.

Interviews used

Federations' members interviews

LEBANESE FOOTBALL FEDERATION General Manager Joseph Moawad (on 15 September 2003, in the headquarters of the Lebanese Football Federation in Beirut)

M. Joseph Moawad, could you present yourself?

My name is Joseph Moawad. I am the general manager of the Lebanese Football Association. My duties are to coordinate day to day work in the federation, supervise all the correspondences and make sure everything run smoothly in the association, locally and internationally.

What constitute your federation's structure? President, members...

We have a higher committee formed of eleven people. They elect the president, the general secretary and the treasurer. They also elect the head of the National Team Committee and the heads of all the other committees (stadium, referees committees). Those are the members that are elected. After that, you have the general manager who oversees the day-to-day work in the office. We have an accountant, a person responsible for the players' matters, the Secretariat Department...

So basically, you have the volunteers, who are the members, and the professionals, the people that you have nominated, the General Manager...
Exactly, all the members of the committee are volunteers, including the president and the general secretary.

How many part-time or full-time employees do you have in your federation?

We have about 11 full-time employees in the office. We have the general manager, three secretaries in the secretariat department, the reception employees and the delivery people, because we always need to send documents to different places. We also have an accountant, a person responsible for competitions, a person responsible for national teams and a person responsible for players' matters. So it is about eleven to twelve employees. We should also not forget also the national teams' employees: the coach, assistant coach, the trainers, those are full-time employees. We have also the same people for the under-20 national team.

What is your annual budget?

Right now I feel that we have a low budget; especially after the change from the former federation. Our budget is around \$1 million a year. But this is a small amount.

Where does the money come from?

There are many sources for money in football: always the TV contract has the biggest budget. Ticket sales in the stadium of the league and of the national team are another budget. We also have souvenirs, even if we didn't get any money from it right now and of course the sponsorship money. Those are the four sources of money in sport in general. I would like also to say that we still don't have a lot of money from sponsorship; that is why our budget is still very low.

Don't you get money from the Lebanese Government?

Sometimes we do get some money, based on projects; for example, the stadiums. This is indirect money, not necessarily cash. Sometimes, we do ask if we have a certain tournament. These are the only times we use the government for money.

How many clubs does your federation have?

We have four divisions in our federation. Twelve teams in the first division. They do increase when you go to the lower divisions. We have about 150 clubs.

How many licensees does your federation have?

Each club has basically four categories. Each category has about 30 players. We have around 120 for the top teams. But when you go down to the fourth division, they have four categories, but not necessary actives. I would say that we have a total of 6 to 7000 licensees.

How many men/women?

We have no women football. But we are starting a program in the beginning of October.

What do you organise at national or international level?

With the national team, it depends on the competitions run around the world. We have the World Cup qualifications, the Asian Cup qualifications, the Olympic Games qualifications, the Asian Cup for the youth, and the FIFA World Cup for the youth. These are the tournaments in which we participate on a national level. At a club level, we have the championship, the cup, where all the divisions participate in; we have a league for each division. We have the Supercup in September of each year. The top teams participate in the Asian Cup championships.

What is the ranking of Lebanon in football at world level?

The ranking of Lebanon in the world right now is still very low. We are 116 upon 200. Our task is to bring it down to less than 100.

How is your relation with the Lebanese Olympic Committee?

It is also very well. We had a great support from the LOC, especially after the results of Lebanese football Olympic team.

Is it a financial support or...?

Support is always needed no matter what.

How is your relation with the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports?

We have a good relationship. We are always in communication with them. They always help us if we need something financially; although, we do understand the situation of the Lebanese Government in general.

But is there an official link between you and them?

No, there is no defined system. When we need help, we ask for it. There is no system where the money comes automatically.

What are the difficulties that you are facing? What do you think went wrong?

The main problem that Lebanon is facing is the fields. They aren't enough fields in Lebanon to train or to play. Those are the main problems. If you have kids in the street that want to play football, there are no places for them to go play. Regardless of the fact that there is no money, the problem will be solved when we will have enough stadiums to play in. Sometimes, even for the national team, we go around Beirut to look for some stadiums to train in. So, we don't have fields at all. Even if we do, it is not always in a good condition.

So is the problem due to the previous war; lack of interest; lack of culture; lack of money; or the lack of governmental support?

I don't want to put it on the previous war because it is a way beyond us, as far as I am concerned. Lack of money is always a major fact. We always need money to build stadiums. We need a lot of money to build a stadium furnished with the right conditions. And the problem is that we don't have this money. We blame it mainly on the financial situation in Lebanon that is reflected also in football.

**LEBANESE VOLLEYBALL FEDERATION General Secretary Walid
Younes (on 5 June 2003, in the Lebanese Volleyball
Federation headquarters, in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon)**

M. Walid Younes, could you present yourself?

My name is Walid Younes. I am 43 year-old. I am a lawyer. I am the General Secretary of the Lebanese Volleyball Federation. I am former Lebanese volleyball national team captain.

What constitute your federation's structure? President,
members.....

Our organisation's chart is as follows: an Executive Committee made up of fifteen members that have different functions. Of course, nobody is paid; like the other Lebanese sport federations, all the members are volunteers. At the head of the Executive Committee, we have the president, two vice-presidents, a general secretary, a treasurer and an accountant. The nine other positions are for members. Apart from the Executive Committee, we have the Technical Committee, the Referee Committee, the Coaching Committee, the Beach Volley-Ball Committee and the Regional Committees. All these committees are directly linked with and bound by the Executive Committee that decide on the names of the members of all these committees.

So you don't have any full-time or part-time employees in your federation?

Some persons are paid, but they are not full-time employees.

What is your annual budget?

About \$150000 a year.

From where does the money come from?

The clubs' contribution fees represent less than 50% of this amount. Each club pays an annual contribution. The clubs' contributions combined an amount of \$50000 a year. As for the other \$100000, they usually come from TV rights or sponsors. This year, with the effort of the Lebanese Republic President and the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports, a decision has been taken to give financial aid of 200Millions Lebanese Pounds (\$133000). Hopefully we will get this amount of money soon. We need to seek every kind of financial aid. \$150000 is the minimum required for us to function. We need to cover our member's, travels, and the national team preparation's expenses.

So your income is usually gathered from contributions, TV rights, sponsors and government's aid?

Yes, the government never paid us. This year is the first year where they decided to pay us.

How many clubs does your federation have?

218 according to the last statistic; we have always been the largest federation in Lebanon. We hope to increase this number to 250 clubs in the next following months. We always had delays in the clubs' registration. We also have clubs that have been dismissed from the federation; before, we had 357 clubs.

How many licensees does your federation have?

About 6000.

How many men/women?

We have eight women first division clubs; and fourteen clubs in the second division. There are at least ten times more men licensees than women licensees.

What do you organise at national or international level?

We organise more competitions at the Arab level than at the international level. In 1997, we organised the Asian Clubs Champions Cup that was held in Beirut. Every year or every two years, we organise a beach volley, club or national team competition at an Arab level. We are a very active member of the Arab Volleyball Confederation where we continuously organise competitions. Six months ago, we organised the Arab Clubs Champions Cup. In 1996 and 1997, we organised the Asian Clubs Champions Cup, where a Lebanese team got the bronze medal. Volleyball in Asia is much more developed than basketball and football. Countries like China, Korea, Japan, India, Taiwan are world-class teams, and therefore are very difficult to beat. So we are doing our utmost to take part under this difficult environment. At a national level, we organise the Excellence Division, the Division 1A, Division 2A and the second division leagues. We also organise the women, junior, youth and all the other age categories competitions. Moreover, we organise beach-volleyball competitions.

What is the ranking of Lebanon in volleyball at the world level?

There is no ranking. We are not participating in the international competitions because we are not taking part in the Asian qualifications rounds. We have to build a strategy plan that requires three or four years of hard work for it to function correctly. There is a big gap in volleyball between Lebanon and the top Asian countries. The main reason behind our refusal to participate is that most of the competitions are held in East Asia. We have travel about fifteen or eighteen hours by plane, which will cost us about \$25000 or \$30000, to play against very strong teams. We are receiving a lot of invitations for the national team which we are refusing. We are participating at club level because the gap is smaller. However, we hope to improve our standards and be able to compete at the Asian level.

How is your relation with the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports?

It is good. We are still waiting that the Lebanese Ministry of Youth and Sports to becomes a real ministry. There is not yet an apparatus. Our relation with the minister is very good. But unfortunately, there is not yet a mechanism in the Ministry of Youth and Sports that defines its role and its link with the federations, in order for us to clearly know how to work with them. There is also no clear standard statute that explain the relations between the Lebanese Olympic Committee and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the relations between the Lebanese Olympic Committee and the federations and the relations between the federations and the Ministry of Youth and Sports. All these links and relations should be explained clearly so as its functions and duties be understood by every sport body on the Lebanese scene.

As you are one of the most important and the biggest federation in Lebanon, how do you perceive yourself on the Lebanese sport 'ladder'? Are you receiving the adequate support? Do you feel that you are unfairly treated compared to the treatment given to the basketball federation, for example?

No, not really. Basketball has been developing thanks to a very big private company: the LBC, the most important TV Channel in Lebanon; and one of its important shareholders Antoine Choueireh, who is the most important figure in the Lebanese basketball and is the president of a very important club: Sagesse, one of the best Lebanese basketball clubs, among the best in Asia. They have received a lot of funding and professional work that have pushed them to this level of professionalism. If one day, the same thing happens in volleyball, things will probably come to this point. It is a question of business opportunities and luck. Now, all the business is in basketball. We hope one day it will go to volleyball.

What are the difficulties that you are facing? What do you think went wrong? Is it the previous war; lack of interest; lack of culture; Lack of money; or is it the lack of governmental support?

All of them. The war had a disastrous impact on us. Before the war, Lebanon, beside Tunisia and Egypt, was considered to be one of the best countries in volleyball. They were the reference. When the war came, Lebanon's volleyball started to decline while that of the others was going up; that is why now we are not a dominant country at an Arab scale anymore. The lack of media interest is also very important.

LEBANESE ATHLETICS FEDERATION General Secretary Raymond Behlok (on 25 May 2003, at Behlok's private office, in the suburbs of Beirut, in Lebanon)

M. Behlok, could you present yourself?

My name is Raymond Behlok. I am the President of the Champville Club and the General Secretary of the Athletics Federation. I was former 400 and 800m Lebanese champion. I also run a business in the wood exchange.

Where is your federation based?

We are located in Zalka, on the 12th floor of the 'Kouyoumdji Building'. Our local's area is 100 to 120 m².

How are you organised? What comprises your federation structure? President, members.....

Like all the other Lebanese federations, we have a president, a vice-president, a general secretary, a treasurer, an accountant and two members.

What is your annual budget?

Between 50 and \$60000 a year.

Where does the money come from?

We get some money from the clubs, some from the Ministry of the Youth and Sports, and some from the IAF (International Athletics Federation).

Do you have any full-time or part-time employee in your federation?

No, we are all volunteers.

How many clubs does your federation have?

Eighteen clubs.

How many licensees does your federation have?

Between 600 and 700 athletes.

How many men/women?

40% Women and 60% Men.

What do you organise at national level?

We organise several competitions. During the cross-country period, we organise a lot of cross-country competitions. We also organise a regional championship. We organise an individual and team Lebanese Championship. We do about twenty meetings a year.

So, what is the ranking of Lebanon in athletics at world level?

We are very far from the world level; especially after the war that has wreaked havoc in the country. But we have a lot of young athletes that we intended to turn into Asian champions.

How is your relation with the athletics clubs and licensees?

We are like a family. We don't have a lot of elite athletes. They are not more than twelve. We are trying to help them as much as we can.

What are the difficulties that you are facing? What do you think went wrong?

Is it the previous war; lack of interest; lack of culture; lack of money; or is it the lack of government support?

Lack of money has resulted in a lot of problems. There is also the lack of interest that people show towards our sport. Today, we have a lot of sport that receive much more attention. But we hope that with all our hard work, we will become at least the fourth or the fifth sport on the Lebanese sport's 'ladder'.

LEBANESE SQUASH FEDERATION Vice-President Roy Di Ferro (on 12 February 2003, in Di Ferro's private home, suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon)

M. Roy Di Ferro, could you present yourself?

My name is Roy Di Ferro, I am the Vice-President of the Lebanese Squash Federation.

What is the federation's structure made of? President, members.....

We have seven members in the federation: a president, a vice-president, a general secretary, a treasurer, an accountant and two members.

What is your annual budget?

It is very limited. It comes from the contributions of the clubs' members of the federation and from the tournaments that we organise. Usually, we have a budget of \$2000 a year. For the first time this year, we received a financial aid of fourteen millions Lebanese Pounds (\$9000) from the government. We received this help because we have organised the Squash Arab Championship.

Do you have full-time employees or part-time employees in your federation?

No, we are all volunteers.

How many clubs do you have?

We have nine clubs registered in the federation. There are about twenty others not registered because they don't have the criteria required by the government.

How many licensees do your federation have?

About 180.

How many men/women?

There are about 160 Men and 20 Women.

What do you organise at national or international level?

At a national level, we organise the Lebanese championship every year. The federated clubs organised their tournaments every year. They don't have to pay anything because they have already paid an annual contribution to the federation. The non-federated clubs organise tournaments with the permission and under the supervision of the federation. For this purpose, they have to pay us a certain amount of money, and this extra-contribution helps us in our budget. At an international level, we have organised the Arab Club Championship and the first Women Arab Championship. Four years ago, the Mont-La Salle club has organised an international tournament where Jordan, Egypt and Cyprus were invited.

What is the ranking of Lebanon in squash at the world level?

At the Arab level, the men's ranking is very poor. The women's ranking is better. We are just second after Egypt. At a world level, we are considered to be part of the lowest category.

How is your relation with the squash athletes, clubs and/or licensees?

The federation's members are elected through a general assembly made of members of the clubs. The relations between the players and the federation are

done through the Technical Commission that communicates and discuss all the technical issues.

How is your relation with the international or regional squash federations?

We have very good relation. Nowadays, the game of squash passes through a period of harmony among the members of the Lebanese federation (which is very rare), between the Lebanese and the Arab federations, and between the Lebanese and the Asian and World federation.

Do you think this harmony is due to the fight that all the squash family is doing to integrate the Olympic games?

Yes, maybe.

How is your relation with the Lebanese Olympic Committee?

Very good. The Lebanese Olympic Committee have helped us several times to send athletes abroad because we didn't have sufficient means. In the last Arab Championship, they were very co-operative.

When you talked about the fourteen Millions Lebanese Pounds, was it the government or the Ministry of Youth and Sports?

It was from the government via the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

What are the difficulties that you are facing? What do you think went wrong?

Is it the previous war; lack of interest; lack of culture; lack of money; or was it the lack of governmental support?

It is the lack of money. To progress, you have to take care of the youth, but there is no money for that. We need qualified coaches. We have coaches, but they are of local standards. To have international coaches, we need financial means. \$2000 or \$3000 a year will not bring you a good coach. We are sending players to the international competitions just to appear on the international scene. For example, this month, we wanted to bring an international coach. We paid \$2000 just to give him the permit. The government didn't help us at all for that. I don't think that we will be able to pay him next year. So, we are in an impasse.

LEBANESE CANOE-KAYAK FEDERATION President Mazen

Ramadan (on 8 May 2003 in the Lebanese Football Federation headquarters in Beirut, Lebanon)

M. Mazen Ramadan, could you present yourself?

My name is Mazen Ramadan. I am an engineer. I was nominated President of the Canoe-Kayak Federation two months ago.

What constitute your federation structure? President, members...

Our federation is made of seven members. We have a president, a general-secretary, M.Ali Awadah, a vice-president, Ms.Rania Khalil, and four members.

Could you tell us where is your federation based?

Due to our lack of means, we don't have a headquarters for the federation. The federation used to get just \$2000 a year from the Ministry of Youth and Sports. One of our goals now is to have a permanent location for the federation. For now, the home of the federation is in my office located on Hamra-Beirut.

What is your annual budget?

Our budget is about \$20000 to \$30000 a year. Last year, we finally got an important aid from the Ministry of Youth and Sports, about \$20000. The years before it was about three to four Millions Lebanese Pound (\$2000 to \$3000).

We used to get the barely minimum for the members to just be able to organise our events.

Do you have full-time employees or part-time employees in your federation?

No, we are all volunteers.

How many clubs do you have?

There are six clubs right now. The clubs are spread out according to the different rivers in Lebanon. We have clubs in the South of Lebanon on the 'Litani' river. We have the 'Nahr-el Kalb' river clubs. Our wish is to have clubs on all the other rivers of Lebanon.

How many licensees do your federation have?

In Lebanon, there are too many players that practice the sport of rafting, which is a 'cousin' of canoe-kayak. They are about 1500 to 2000 rafters. We are trying, as much as possible, to transform these players into kayak athletes, because all the international competitions are made according to kayak rules. Rafting is a leisure sport. Canoe-kayak is leisure and a competitive sport.

How many men/women?

We have important women participation; but of course, there are more men (60 to 65% Men).

What do you organise at national or international level?

At a national level, we organise competitions that have relations with certain events. We have organised for example a competition in the commemoration

of the liberation of Lebanon. Most of the competitions are organised between the spring and the summer, when the rivers are the most adequate to the practice of the sport. We also organise the university championships, which are done under the supervision of our federation. At the international level, we participate to the Olympic and World Cup tournaments (they are organised every year.) Right now, we are sending an athlete and an administrative member, to participate in a training camp in France, in preparation for the World Cup tournaments that are going to be held in Germany.

What is the ranking of Lebanon in canoe-kayak at world level?

We are very far from the top teams. We are just trying to always be present in the world kayak family and in the IOC.

How is their relation with the athletes and clubs of your federation?

Our goal is to increase the number of our clubs and licensees. The number of kayak athletes is still small. It is a sport that requires courage and responsibility, and it cannot be done alone. You need to have a car to take the equipment with you. We need to support the clubs in order to help the athletes in their practice. We are very close to our athletes, especially those that have the potential to participate at the world level. Concerning the clubs, we need to meet with them in order to see what can be done in order to improve our relations.

What are the difficulties that you are facing? What do you think went wrong?
Is it the previous war; lack of interest; lack of culture; lack of money; or is it
the lack of governmental support?

The main problem of our sport is the obstacles found in our rivers: Wheel, post.... This makes the game dangerous and almost impossible. We need to have the proper infrastructure in our rivers. Every time our athletes want to practice, they have to clean the river by themselves. It is not 50 meters or 100 meters. It is one kilometre that they have to clear. It takes one full day to do that. And again, they have to start the same thing next year. The second problem is the small number of clubs and licensees in the federation. We need to have more sponsorship and advertising to show that this game exists in Lebanon. There are too many people that think that this sport doesn't exist in Lebanon. They need to know that there are licensed coaches and professional people that can teach them. There are many seminars that can be done in order to make the people discover this game. There is for sure a lack of money. Money is a must. With a reasonable amount of money, we can achieve interesting results.

LEBANESE JUDO FEDERATION President Francois Saadé (on 14 May 2003 in the Lebanese Judo Federation headquarters, in Beirut, Lebanon.)

M. François Saadé, could you present yourself?

My name is François Saadé. I am a lawyer. I am the Lebanese Judo Federation President since the foundation of this federation. I have also been, for some time, the President of the Arab federation. I am also the Vice-President of the Mediterranean Judo Federation. I was a former Lebanese judo champion. I have passed through all the levels of the judo 'ladder'. I have been an athlete, then a referee, then an administrator then I became the federation's president.

Could you tell us where is your federation based?

We are currently based in the 'Bhûdda' club. We are waiting for the federation to give us an official location.

How are you organised? How is your federation structure made? President, members...

We have a president, a general secretary, an accountant, a vice-president, a treasurer and two members.

What is your annual budget?

We cannot talk about a budget because, since we started the federation, we didn't get any serious money from the government. We have put all the money from our 'pocket'. We also got some individual help.

So, how does your federation function? Don't you receive any contribution?

Let me give you an example. As President of the 'Buddha' club that has a big complex on the beach with many apartments, suites and restaurants, I was able to invite foreign delegations with a much reduced cost. As a result, we asked them to do the same when we were invited. That is how we function. We sometimes had a 50 to \$60000 budget a year. We filled our task or by barter or by individual investment. It is a game that I love. So I was enthusiast to help its development by any means.

Do you have full-time employees or part-time employees in your federation?

No, we are all volunteers.

How many clubs do you have?

We have 25 clubs; without counting the schools. Lately, they became fifteen or sixteen. They tried to reduce us to nine to weaken our federation, but I didn't accept it. In total, if we count the clubs and the schools, we will have 50 clubs.

How many licensees do your federation have?

400 to 500. But there are about 1500 people that practise Judo in Lebanon. In the schools, those that practise Judo are not federation licensees. They participate in schools championships.

How many men/women?

75% men, 25% women.

What do you organise at national or international level?

We organise the Lebanese championship every year with all the different categories: 'poussins', 'benjamins', 'minimes', cadet, senior, junior, women. At international level, we organised games like Lebanon v/s Jordan, Lebanon v/s Cyprus, Lebanon v/s Syria. We also organise international competitions with eight teams participating. We also organise, every year, the Arab Championship with fifteen to sixteen teams participating. We organised the West Asian championship where we got good results. We also organised the Mediterranean championship with teams like France, Italy and Greece.

What is exactly the ranking of Lebanon in judo at world level?

We cannot talk about our ranking in the world. It is difficult to compare us with the rest, considering all the top-notch countries like France, Japan, Korea and China. The best result we have achieved in judo was by our former athlete Fady Seikaly who attained the ninth place in the Barcelona 92 Olympic Games after passing five rounds. In West Asia, we got one gold, one silver and two bronze medals. In the 'Francophony games', we got a silver and a bronze medal. Our standards are not bad.

How is your relation with the judo athletes and clubs?

We have different persons that deal with different aspects of the game (coaching, refereeing, technical matters). We are very close to the athletes because we were all former judo athletes.

What are the difficulties that you are facing? What do you think went wrong?

Is it the previous war; lack of interest; lack of culture; lack of money; or is it the lack of governmental support?

The war undoubtedly caused some damage. But even during the war, we were the only federation that didn't stop the Lebanese championships. We used to be the best Arab country before the war. During the war, we tried to maintain our level by participating in some international competitions. But we certainly went down. There is also an important lack of money. When we see the millions invested in basketball, we just ask for 5 to maximum 10% of this money. I am sure that we will be able to have a medal in the World Championship. They tell us that basketball is a team sport and for that, needs an important investment. We agree with that. But in the Olympics, it will only get one medal. It is what can be made with one single judo athlete with much less investment. And we are very close to reach an international level in Judo. Rudy Hashash, for example, has been Arab champion for eight times. Fares, Wissam Abi Nader and Mario Bou Chebel have all international standards. They are just training before the international competitions because they are disgusted by the lack of support. They are sick of investing from their own 'pocket'. They have reached an international level. They just need financial aid to continue. I understand why Rudy Hashash went to play rugby league

now. The economic situation is difficult in Lebanon now. They are tired of the lack of financial support.

What are you expecting from the future?

It will be very positive if we get help from the Ministry of Youth and Sports. They can help us also without spending any money. It can also be applied in all the federations that are having a world championship. The Middle East Airlines is often travelling half empty. They can at least make us travel for free. It will help us a lot. We will then take care of the rest. We asked for that several times. We asked the Minister of Youth and Sport the President of the Republic and the Lebanese Olympic Committee. Nothing happened.

I hope that the new measure proposed by the son of the president, Emile Lahoud Jr. (who is a former swimming champion and a deputy in the parliament), which asked that 1% of the money coming from the tax on alcohol and tobacco goes to sport, will be accepted. We have been asking for this measure for 20 years now. We will then have 17 to \$18 Millions for sport. Things will then get better for sure. But the money should then be divided according to the merits of each federation. The more good results you achieve, the more financial support you will have. Then the players will be encouraged to participate and to try to achieve results. In Cyprus, which is a small country, the champion gets \$300, the second \$200 and the third \$100. These incentives are very important. They used this in Algeria. That is how their results improved.

LEBANESE WUSHU FEDERATION General Secretary George Nseir
(on 3 February 2003, at the Antonins club, in Beirut suburbs,
Lebanon).

M. George Nseir, could you present yourself?

My name is George Nseir. I am a wushu coach. I am the coach of the national team and the General Secretary of the Wushu Federation.

How is your federation structure constituted? President, members...

We have a president, a first vice-president, a second vice-president, a general secretary, a treasurer and members.

What is your annual budget?

We plan for 20 or \$25000 a year to function in a good way, but we are working on a budget of 6 to \$7000.

From where does the money come?

Licensees' contribution fees.

Isn't there any money from the government?

Last year, for the first time, we received 9Millions Lebanese Pounds (\$6000).

Do you have full-time or part-time employees in your federation?

No, we are all volunteers.

How many clubs do you have?

13 inside the federation; we are in the process of integrating 19 others.

How many licensees do your federation have?

700 to 800.

How many men/women?

700 Men, 100 Women.

What do organise at national or international level?

We have a fixed national calendar from the beginning to the end of the year. The year is divided into three periods: the Independence cup, the National Cup and the National Championship. At an international level, we have organised the Arab Championship once.

What is the ranking of Lebanon in wushu at world level?

We are ranked 27 upon 76.

How is your relation with the Lebanese Olympic Committee?

Very good.

Do you have any financial aid from them?

No, the financial aid, if any, comes from the Ministry of Youth and Sports. We were promised to have one from the Lebanese Olympic Committee this year.

Before we didn't receive any money from the LOC. Now that we will probably become an Olympic sport, we will receive some aid.

What are the difficulties that you are facing? What do you think went wrong? Is it the previous war; lack of interest; lack of culture; lack of money; or is it the lack of governmental support?

For sure, there is a lack of support from the Lebanese Government. There is also a lack of interest on the part of our students. Contrary to before, our new athletes are not very serious. We have high-level athletes that are not giving everything; even though they are receiving a lot of help. The federation is paying their travel expenses.

Why is this lack of interest?

They are mainly studying, looking for jobs.

So you mean that the main problem is the lack of professionalism?

Exactly.

Do you think that your future depends mainly on the world popularity of wushu?

Yes, wushu is a new sport. It is not as popular as the other Olympic sports. It is mainly due to this lack of media popularity that we are struggling so hard.

Elite athletes interviews

LEBANESE ELITE FOOTBALL athlete Hassan Ayoub (on 18 May 2003, at the Bank of Beirut and of the Arab Countries, Beirut, Lebanon)

Hassan, could you present yourself?

My name is Hassan Ayoub. I am a former athlete of the Lebanese Football National Team, and where I served as its captain for eight years. I was also captain of the Lebanese Olympic team for two years. I started football in 1977 in the Nijmeh's youth team (the most popular club in Lebanon). Then, in 1986, I went to Safa where I played in the first division from 1986 to 1996. I was the captain of this team for two years. In 1996, I was transferred from Safa to Sagesse for \$100000. It has been at the time the highest transfer fee ever to be paid in the history of Lebanese football. In the year 2002, I have been transferred to the Olympic Beirut Club (a new very ambitious club) for the amount of \$130000. I have scored eight goals for the national team. In the Lebanese championship, I have scored more than 100 goals.

What is your job?

I am an employee in the BBAC (Bank of Beirut and of the Arab Countries) bank. Football is my passion. But it has been much more than that. It has been similar to a profession.

Did you work in the bank during all your football years?

When I started football, I was a fisherman. When football started to take all my time, my club gave me a position in the BBAC. I didn't ask them for that, but concerned about my future, I accepted and I stopped fishing. It has been now my thirteenth year in the bank. So, in all my years of Football, I have in parallel worked in the bank. The administration of the bank has been very co-operative and helpful. It understood my situation and has encouraged me during my entire career. The bank's general director, M.Abbas El Halabé, who was a former athlete, has been a great asset to me. This understanding spirit has helped me to cope with my 'two professions', the one in the bank and the one on the pitch.

Do you consider yourself a professional football player?

I have always behaved like a professional. I have always considered football like a profession.

Did you receive money from Football?

Yes.

How much was your monthly wage?

While with Safa, from 1986 till 1994, I used to earn \$300/month, which was the maximum at that time. From 1995 to 1996, I earned about \$450 a month. When I was transferred to Sagesse, I began to earn \$600 a month. In my last year of contract in Sagesse, I earned \$1000 a month. When I transferred to Olympic Beirut, my salary reached \$1500 a month. Because I was injured, my salary came down to \$1000. This is without the bonuses. In every game, we used to have a \$100 bonus. In the Olympic Beirut, we used to get a \$500

bonus per game. In a club like Olympic Beirut, you can easily earn \$3000 to \$4000 a month.

Do some football players get more than that?

The ones that don't have a profession besides football get more than that. A player like Moussa Hojeij (one of the most prolific figure in Lebanese Football), gets about \$2000 a month without bonus. It is a good wage. I could have done that. But I preferred to earn less from Football but to have a profession in parallel. I still have 30 years in the bank. It allows me to have insurance, indemnity, and the bank helps in the school fees for my children. Moreover, right now, I earn \$900 from the bank. If I add them to my football salary, I will have more than \$2000 a month. More than the money and the insurance, we get a lot of cultural, computer and English courses from the banks. I think those extra-sportive factors are very important.

So according to you, what are the difficulties that you are facing? Is it the previous war; lack of money and support from the different instances (Lebanese Olympic Committee, Ministry of Youth and Sports, federations, government and clubs); or is it the lack of sport culture?

In every sport we have positive and negative points. The sport managers must always try to reach the positive points and reduce the negative ones. The biggest problem of Lebanese football is that there are too many presumptuous people who keep on saying 'I am going to do this and that'. There are a lot of lies and hidden things. I don't think I will be able to talk about the new federation because they have just started to work. But the former federations have all been the arena of political and clan struggle. People that are working

with integrity are considered weak. The war has created this climate in sport, and this climate still prevails. Personal benefits are preferred to general interest. This issue is found in the mismanagement of the national team and the lack of integrity of the Lebanese championship. I hope that things would change with the new people in the federation (the new committee of the federation has started on 2002.) To answer your question, our problems are related to all the points that you have stated in your question. The war has affected a lot. It has stopped the Lebanese championship for so many years. The standards went down. Young people were more interested in fighting than in playing football. Football reflected the situation of the country at that time. During the war, as Beirut was divided in two, east (for the Christians), west (for the Muslims), we had two federations. This was against all sport legitimacy. At the end of the war, in 1991, what became the national federation recognised only the federation of West Beirut. After 1991, we started to play in the name of Lebanon. Things became more official. But even with less cheating on the field, things were still bad at the federation level. We had a lot of fixed games at international level. Like the one in 1996 against Kuwait for the qualification of the 1996 Asian Cup. We lost 5-3 in Lebanon, and then they 'gave' us a draw in Kuwait: 0-0. They wanted to help us to get a point to save our honour, but at the same time, they will be the ones to reach the final rounds of the Cup. Nobody knew about that except the players that felt that something went wrong, considering all the gifts that Kuwait sent us. Cheating and lying is still a common thing in Lebanese football. And I feel very sorry for the fans and for the country. The war and the mismanagement caused a lot of damages. The players don't have ambition anymore. They had never lived in a professional sport atmosphere. They always behaved like amateurs, going out at night before a game and having a

very harmful lifestyle and life hygiene. All the players that had a proper discipline and a kind of professionalism paid the mistakes of this mismanagement. This country doesn't give a pushing hand nor offers opportunities to those who intend to succeed.

What are your expectations for the future?

It is difficult to predict. Ten years ago, we used to say that football will be much better. Four or five years later, things were even worse than before. And now things are becoming even worse. Football is politicised. It reflects the country's atmosphere. The federations are constructed to satisfy a certain political party; even though you still have persons working with integrity. These persons are very rare to find. You have much more persons who have political influence. I am quite pessimistic about the future. You cannot build the future on such a harmful present. The people that are coming to the federations are behaving like their predecessors. There is a lack of culture. We are not giving a proper attention to the youth, the refereeing, the fan base, the marketing and the media coverage. Journalists are making their living by saying bad things about this or that player instead of offering a proper coverage to the sport. Media has the most important role in improving the standards of Football. I feel that it is not fulfilling its task at all. I am not saying that with a condemning spirit. You asked me to be sincere and that is what I intend to do.

LEBANESE ELITE VOLLEYBALL athlete Elie Abi Chedid (on 11 March 2003, at the Antonins university, in Beirut suburbs)

Elie, could you present yourself?

My name is Elie Abi Chedid. I play volleyball in Ghazir Volleyball Club, in Lebanese Volleyball First Division. I am a third year physical education graduate student in the Antonins university.

So you just study and play volley Ball. Do you have another job?

No, nothing else.

Are you professional, semi-professional or amateur? Do you receive any money from volleyball?

Well, I cannot say that I am a professional. I think we could say that I am semi-professional. Of course, I am paid. But I don't have a working contract. There is no legal documents protecting my contract. It is between the club and me.

Could you tell us how much you are paid?

Of course. I have a monthly wage of \$1000. The club where I play pays me a full scholarship at the university.

What is the ranking of your club, Ghazir, at a national level?

We are currently the first in the league. Usually, we are second. Last year, we won the Lebanese cup.

Are you a national team player?

Yes, I have been playing there for four years.

According to you, what are the difficulties that you are facing in Lebanon?

The problems that I am facing as a player is that we, the volleyball athletes are not officially considered as professional. We cannot give all our time to practice. We cannot give 100% to volleyball. Compared to other countries, the financial rewards we are receiving are not enough to permit us to train without doing something else. In basketball, the situation is different. The money that they receive permits them to practice without doing something else. We cannot do that in volleyball, because the maximum that a player can earn here is \$1000. That is why the level of a player cannot improve and reach a certain degree of stability. Sometimes, I go to practice very tired because of all the hours I spent in the university. The problem of volleyball in general is also that the game is suffering from a lack of media support. We also have an important problem of mismanagement with the persons that were taking care of the federation before. Now the new persons in charge are working very hard to improve the standards of the game. And things are really getting better right now. LBC (the most important TV channel in Lebanon) will transmit the final four. More magazines are involved.

So are the problems of volleyball in Lebanon linked to the previous war; to the lack of money and support from the different instances (Lebanese

Olympic Committee, Ministry of Youth and Sports, federations, government and clubs?); or is it the lack of sport culture?

It is first of all the lack of money. There is not enough money for the players and for the national teams. For example, when we use to go to the national team, we didn't have any financial reward. Some players couldn't go the national team because they had jobs which they couldn't simply leave to participate with the national team in addition to the fact that they will not get any incentives for that. We are feeling also that there is a lack of interest in sport from the Lebanese Government. Things are changing to be more positive right now, though.

LEBANESE ELITE SWIMMER Sevak Demerdjian (on 23 April 2003 at Demerdjian's private office, in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon)

Sevak, could you present yourself?

My name is Sevak Demerdjian. I am 27 years old. I have studied marketing. I am a professional swimmer.

Do you mean that you earn money from swimming?

No, no, we don't earn any money. We just swim for ourselves simply because there is not any goal that we can aim for in Lebanon.

So what is your job?

I work in sales and marketing in a family business.

Could you tell me what is your record? What do you have won at national or international level?

In 1992, I participated in a competition in Turkey where several countries were invited. In 1993, I went to the World University Games in Buffalo, New York, where I obtained the 17th place in 50 M freestyle and 23rd in 100M freestyle. I broke the Lebanese record at that time. In 1994, I won the Lebanese Championship. In 1995, in the Arab Championship that was held in Zahlé, Lebanon, we won the second place. In 1996, I went to Turkey to participate in the European Championship in swimming; there I was chosen as the most valuable player of the tournament, won one gold and two silver medals. In 1997, I went back to that competition and took the second place. In

the same year, I went to a local competition in France and won the first place. In 1998, I started to play water polo. In 1999, we took the Lebanese Championship in water Polo. We went to Greece several times. In 2000, I was chosen as the best Lebanese player in water polo. In 2001, we went to Cyprus, played against and beaten their national team and their club's champion. In 2002, we went to Saudi Arabia to play the Panarabian championship and won the fifth place.

Do you define yourself as a swimmer or as a water-polo player?

I think that I am too old for swimming now. In Lebanon, we don't have qualified coaches. There is no support from the government. No one supports you. That is why we don't have any goals in swimming. If you train, you do it for the sake of it. In winter times, there is no water polo competition, so we swim and do our own exercise. In the summer, I go back to my team and play water polo. My main goal now is water polo because as I told you, there is no support in swimming. There is no support either in water polo, but I have fun because it is a team sport that I can do with couple of friends.

In all these years of competitions, in swimming or in water polo (It is the same federation), did the federation pay your travel expenses?

No, in swimming, I used to pay for everything. In water polo, my club, 'Satellity' is supporting us by paying travel expenses.

Is it the same thing now in swimming? Are the athletes still paying for their travel expenses?

Of course. Who do you think will pay for them?

So according to you, what are the difficulties that you are facing? Is it the previous war; lack of money and support from the different instances (Lebanese Olympic Committee, Ministry of Youth and Sports, federations, government and clubs?); or is it the lack of sport culture?

The difficulty that we are facing is that we are not training properly. You wake up early in the morning. You do your work out. Then you go to your work. You don't rest. Swimming is a sport where you need to train a lot and rest a lot. We are always tired. We don't have time to train properly.

The big problem is that there are no professional people working in the federation. There is a severe lack of professionalism. There is also no money, no sponsors, and no support. We need professional people in the federation who are able to bring sponsors or any kind of support in order to train kids in swimming and form champions.

LEBANESE ELITE SKIER Cesar Keyrouz (on 10

February 2003, at Keyrouz' private home, in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon

Cesar, could you present yourself?

My name is Cesar Keyrouz. I am 22 years old. I have a B.A in sport studies in Balamand University in Lebanon; and I am right now pursuing my master degree in sport physiology, besides working as a physical education teacher.

Could you tell us what you have achieved in skiing?

After the division of the federation, in 1999, I have been the junior Lebanese champion. Then, in 2000, I have been ranked third in the adult category ('slalom'). After that, ski competitions stopped because of the federation quarrels and divisions. In 2002, after a two-year stoppage, I rejoined the national team. In 2003, I have participated in the University Games in Italy, and in the Asian Championships, in Japan.

What is your current ranking in Lebanon?

In Lebanon, I am the first in the 'Slalom' and the fourth in the 'Giant'.

Are you professional, semi-professional or amateur? Did you receive any money from skiing?

I have never earned any penny. My club pays my training and ticket fees. And I am sponsored by Rossignol that offers me my ski's equipment.

So your main profession is physical education teacher?

Yes, it is my first year as a physical education teacher. I work from Monday to Thursday. It leaves me Friday and the weekends to train for ski competition.

As you told us before, you are also pursuing your studies. Are you able to balance between your job, your studies and your training?

The thing that is bothering me the most is that the ski season in Lebanon is very short. It is barely three months. So, I have very little time to train because of my job. I find it also very difficult to study, train and work all together. But I have no choice. I have to earn a living.

What are the difficulties that you are facing? Was it the previous war; lack of money and support from the different instances (Lebanese Olympic Committee, Ministry of Youth and Sports, federations, government and clubs?); or is it the lack of sport culture?

I have no idea about the previous problems; however, these days, I think that the federation has an interesting budget, but they don't know how and where to use it. For example, the federation, the Lebanese Olympic Committee and the Ministry of Youth and Sports had paid a lot of money on one single female skier (Shérine Njeim) without making sure to set a contingency plan that would cover failure or injury for this athlete. They didn't invest on the other members of the national team. This girl has been injured, and I personally think that the money was wasted. I think that if they have invested on the other members of the national team and on the youth, the result would have been much better. To answer exactly to your question, I think that the war and the lack of sport culture had a certain impact on the bad results. Now, we feel

that there is good will, but a deficient management and policy. They should care much more about the youth. And they should also send the Lebanese athletes to train abroad through the year.

**LEBANESE ELITE JUDO athlete Wissam Abi Nader (on
10 May 2003, at Mtaileb Country Club, in Beirut suburbs, Lebanon)**

Wissam, could you present yourself?

My name is Wissam Abi Nader. I am twenty years old. I am a third year graduate student in NDU (Notre-Dame University). I am majoring in computer science. I practice many sports. But my main sport is judo.

Could you tell us what is your record in judo?

I have been practising judo for sixteen years now. In the first years of my practice, I just participated to competitions between clubs. Then, I became the Lebanese champion for twelve consecutive years, in the different weight and age categories that have participated in. When I was seventeen years old, I won the senior championship. I participated also in the Youth Olympic Games in Moscow in 1998, in the Paris International tournament (where I had the opportunity to do a seminar with David Douillet) and the World Championship in Tunis, and many other international tournaments (Cyprus, Iraq, Bulgaria...)

What did you win at international level?

It depends on the country that took part in the international event. When there is an international tournament with ten to fifteen countries participating, I am often between the three first. It depends on the standards of the countries participating.

Do you have a certain world ranking?

Yes, I am currently 22nd upon 82.

Are you a professional, semi-professional or an amateur? Do you receive any money from judo?

No, I don't receive any money. But the federation is paying for all my travel expenses. I am a university student. To earn money, I teach judo in several places (schools and country clubs).

Do you have any sponsor?

No. The sponsors usually go to the federations, not the athletes.

Is it the same with the other judo top athletes in other countries?

No, in other countries, they have a monthly salary paid by the government. They have a training session every day. We just train three times a week, two hours a session. But, one month before a major competition, though, we have a three-hour training session every day. But it is not enough compared with the other countries where the athletes are full-time professionals.

How are you dealing with university, part-time jobs and training? Do you have a special plan made by the federation or another sport body?

Well, I think I am doing that successfully by myself. I am coping with everything. It has been so for a long time.

According to you, what are the difficulties that you are facing? Is it the previous war; lack of money and support from the different instances

(Lebanese Olympic Committee, Ministry of Youth and Sports, federations, government and clubs?); or is it the lack of sport culture?

First of all, I think it is the lack of money. To practice with the national team, I have to drive one hour by car. Unfortunately, the federation is not paying me the fuel expenses to travel. The war undoubtedly affected every sport we are playing. We feel also that there is an important lack of support and interest from the government. For example, basketball was developed here thanks to private companies and sponsors. It was not due to the help of the government. I feel that this is the problem of all the sports in Lebanon. Moreover, in judo, despite all the lack of money and support, we are having very good results. All the foreign coaches (Japanese, Algerian and French) who are coming to Lebanon and giving us seminars are saying that, with a proper managerial staff, Lebanon will be ranked among the three first countries in the world. The Lebanese are known to be strong and brave in combat sports.

**LEBANESE ELITE TAEKWONDO Athlete Noel Mokhaiber (on 20
May 2003, at the Eastwood College, in Beirut suburbs)**

Noel, could you present yourself?

My name is Noel Mokhaiber. I am the Lebanese taekwondo champion of the 62 kg Category. I am 19 years old. I am a second year student at the university of Kaslik, majoring in computer sciences.

What have you achieved so far in your sport?

I have won the Lebanese championship. I have also won some international tournaments that were organised in Lebanon. I have won some medals in some tournaments organised in Cyprus and Jordan.

Have you already participated in Asian or world championship?

In September, we have the world championship in Germany. We started the preparation for this competition.

Are you professional, semi-professional or amateur? Do you receive any money from taekwondo?

In Lebanon, we are all considered amateurs. We all have a different job or are still students. Taekwondo is a hobby for us. But we are trying to behave like professionals even if we train two times less than the others. We are trying to achieve some results abroad.

What were the difficulties that you have faced?

We don't have enough time to train. In foreign countries, they train two to three times a day. We just have one training session a day. In the summer, we try to have two training sessions a day before the Championship. Moreover, unlike other countries, we are not paid. We are paying for everything.

What do you think went wrong? Is it the previous war; lack of money and support from the different instances (Lebanese Olympic Committee, Ministry of Youth and Sports, federations, government and clubs?); or is it the lack of sport culture?

We had a problem inside the taekwondo federation, but, one week ago, elections took place and the federation president was replaced. We hope things will get better now. Sports in general have always lacked support. Only basketball right now is having sufficient support.

**LEBANESE ELITE SQUASH athlete Joy Khoury (on 1
February 2003, at Khoury's private home, in Beirut, Lebanon)**

Joy, could you present yourself?

My name is Joy Khoury. I am 42 years old. I have been playing squash for 25 years. I was member of the Lebanese national team for a period of six years. I played tournaments outside and inside Lebanon. But most of the tournaments were held in Lebanon.

What was your ranking in Lebanon?

The best ranking I have achieved was second in Lebanon. Nowadays, I am ranked sixth.

Where you a professional, semi-professional or an amateur? Did you receive any money from squash?

I was an amateur.

What is your profession then?

I have a business degree in advertising.

In all your competition years, what were the difficulties that you were facing? Was it the war; lack of money and support from the different institutions (Lebanese Olympic Committee, Ministry of Youth and Sports, federations, government and clubs?); or was it the lack of sport culture?

The difficulties that we all faced were the lack of professionalism in Lebanon. The federation has been absent for so many years. We (the athletes) were training alone and organising the competitions ourselves. We didn't have any local or foreign coach. Nobody was paid and nobody followed up on our competition.

Do you think the war played a certain role in that?

It certainly did. But the war has been over from almost fifteen years. And very few things have changed. There is still no money, no coaches and no interest. It didn't change a lot from then.

LEBANESE ELITE WUSHU athlete Joe Kamel (on 3

February 2003, in the Antonins club, in Beirut suburbs, Lebanon)

Joe, could you present yourself?

My name is Joe Kamel. I am a last-year sport studies graduate student of the Lebanese University. I have been the Lebanese champion in wushu for many years. I was ranked third in Europe in 1998, third in Europe in 2003 and second in the 2000 world cup.

Are you a professional, semi-professional or an amateur? Do you receive any money from wushu?

No, I don't receive any money. But the federation is paying for all my travel expenses.

What were the difficulties that you have faced?

No body cares about sports. There is no money.

Is it the previous war; lack of money and support from the different institutions (Lebanese Olympic Committee, Ministry of Youth and Sports, federations, government and clubs?); or is it the lack of sport culture?

I think it is all of them. The war has an important impact; people now just care about how they are going to live. The federations lack money. The government is nearly bankrupt.

Interview with a Club's head

'THE ESCAPE' club, Georges El-Hajj, head of squash (on 18 February 2003, in 'The Escape' club, in Beirut suburbs, Lebanon]

Georges, could you present yourself?

My name is Georges El Hajj. I am a squash player. I am ranked first in Lebanon. I am also a manager in the Escape club, and a member of the Technical Commission of the Lebanese Squash Federation.

What is your role in the Escape club?

I am a manager in the administration of this club for squash, and for the other sports.

What is your budget? How does the money come? Sponsors? Municipalities?

There is no budget. The money comes from players' contribution fees. That is the biggest problem for sport in Lebanon. There is no budget.

But in certain sports, if the federation doesn't have the money, the related club usually subsidise the needed money?

Not in squash. Well, sometime the federation gives money to certain clubs that are 'their friends'. It is not the case with 'The Escape'. Funding is often dependent on personal relation or on community relations. All the federations are constituted

according to confessional communities. Some federations are for the Maronites, other for the Sunnites, other for the Shiites....

How many squash full-time employees do you have? How many part-time employees?

We have full-time employees, but not exclusively for squash. The administration deals with everything. There is no part-time or full-time employee just for squash.

How many squash licensees do you have in your club?

More than 20.

How many men/women?

5% women, 95% men. It is the same in all the squash clubs in Lebanon; in a women tournament in Lebanon, there are usually only four athletes who participate.

How is their relation with the other sport bodies of the country (their federation, the ministry of Youth and Sports, the Lebanese Olympic Committee....)?

First of all, as we are not an Olympic sport, we are not yet part of the Lebanese Olympic Committee. But things will probably change, because the President of the LOC wants to help all the sports. With the Ministry of Youth and Sports, there is no relation yet. We just see them when they want to have our contribution fee. And the Lebanese Squash Federation is too weak to have a certain impact on the game. The sport of squash in Lebanon depends on the few athletes that play it.

What are the difficulties that you are facing? What do you think went wrong? Is it the previous war; lack of interest; lack of culture; lack of money; or is it the lack of support?

First of all, there is not enough information and culture on the game of squash. People play it just to keep in shape. They don't ask or care about the history of this game. Then there is an economical problem. Squash is an expensive game. Also, the kids are more tented today, through the Internet, to go for the computer games.

Table 1- Religious communities in the Lebanese Constitution

‘Preamble

h. The abolition of political confessionalism is a basic national goal and shall be achieved according to a gradual plan.

Article 9 [Conscience, Belief]

There shall be absolute freedom of conscience. The state in rendering homage to the Most High shall respect all religions and creeds and guarantees, under its protection, **the free exercise of all religious rites provided that public order is not disturbed.** It also guarantees that the personal status and religious interests of the population, to whatever religious sect they belong, is respected.

Article 10 [Education, Confessional Schools]

Education is free insofar as it is not contrary to public order and morals and does not interfere with the dignity of any of the religions or creeds. **There shall be no violation of the right of religious communities to have their own schools provided they follow the general rules issued by the state regulating public instruction.**

Article 19 [Constitutional Council]

A Constitutional Council is established to supervise the constitutionality of laws and to arbitrate conflicts that arise from parliamentary and presidential elections. The President, the President of the Parliament, the Prime Minister, along with any

Ten Members of parliament, have the right to consult this council on matters that relate to the constitutionality of laws. **The officially recognized heads of religious communities have the right to consult this council only on laws relating to personal status, the freedom of belief and religious practice, and the freedom of religious education.** The rules governing the organisation, operation, composition, and modes of appeal of the council are decided by a special law.

[Chapter] II. The Legislative Power, Article 22 [Senate]

With the election of the first parliament on a national, non-confessional basis, **a Senate is established in which all the religious communities are represented.** Its authority is limited to major national issues.

Article 24 [Electoral Laws]

(1) The Chamber of Deputies is composed of elected members; their number and the method of their election is determined by the electoral laws in effect. Until such time as the Chamber enacts new electoral laws on a non-confessional basis, **the distribution of seats is according to the following principles:**

a. Equal representation between Christians and Muslims.

b. Proportional representation among the confessional groups within each religious community.

c. Proportional representation among geographic regions.

(2) Exceptionally, and for one time only, the seats that are currently vacant, as well as the new seats that have been established by law, are to be filled by appointment, all at once, and by a majority of two thirds of the Government of National Unity.

This is to establish equality between Christians and Muslims as stipulated in

the Document of National Accord [The Taef Agreement]. The electoral laws will specify the details regarding the implementation of this clause.

[Part] F. On the Abolition of Political Confessionalism

Article 95 [National Committee]

(1) The first Chamber or Deputies, **which is elected on the basis of equality between Muslims and Christians, takes the appropriate measures to realize the abolition of political confessionalism according to a transitional plan.** A National Committee is to be formed, headed by the President of the Republic, including, in addition to the President of the Chamber of Deputies and the Prime Minister, leading political, intellectual, and social figures.

(2) The tasks of this Committee are to study and **propose the means to ensure the abolition of confessionalism,** propose them to the Chamber of Deputies and the Ministers, and supervise the execution of the transitional plan.

(3) During the transitional phase:

a. The confessional groups are to be represented in a just and equitable fashion in the formation of the Cabinet.

b. The principle of confessional representation in public service
Jobs in the judiciary, in the military and security institutions, and in public and mixed agencies are to be cancelled in accordance with the requirements of national reconciliation; they shall be replaced by the principle of expertise and competence. However, Grade One posts and their equivalents are exempt from this rule, and the posts must be distributed equally between Christians and Muslims without reserving any particular job for any confessional group but rather applying the principles of expertise and competence.'

Though it is clearly stated (Preamble, Article '9', '10' and '19') that the religious aspiration and divergence should not interfere at anytime with the path followed by the government, Articles '22', '24' and '95', state that the equality in the participation of the religious groups inside the state is compulsory if we want to reach the abolition of confessionalism.

Table 2 – The Lebanese sport pyramid

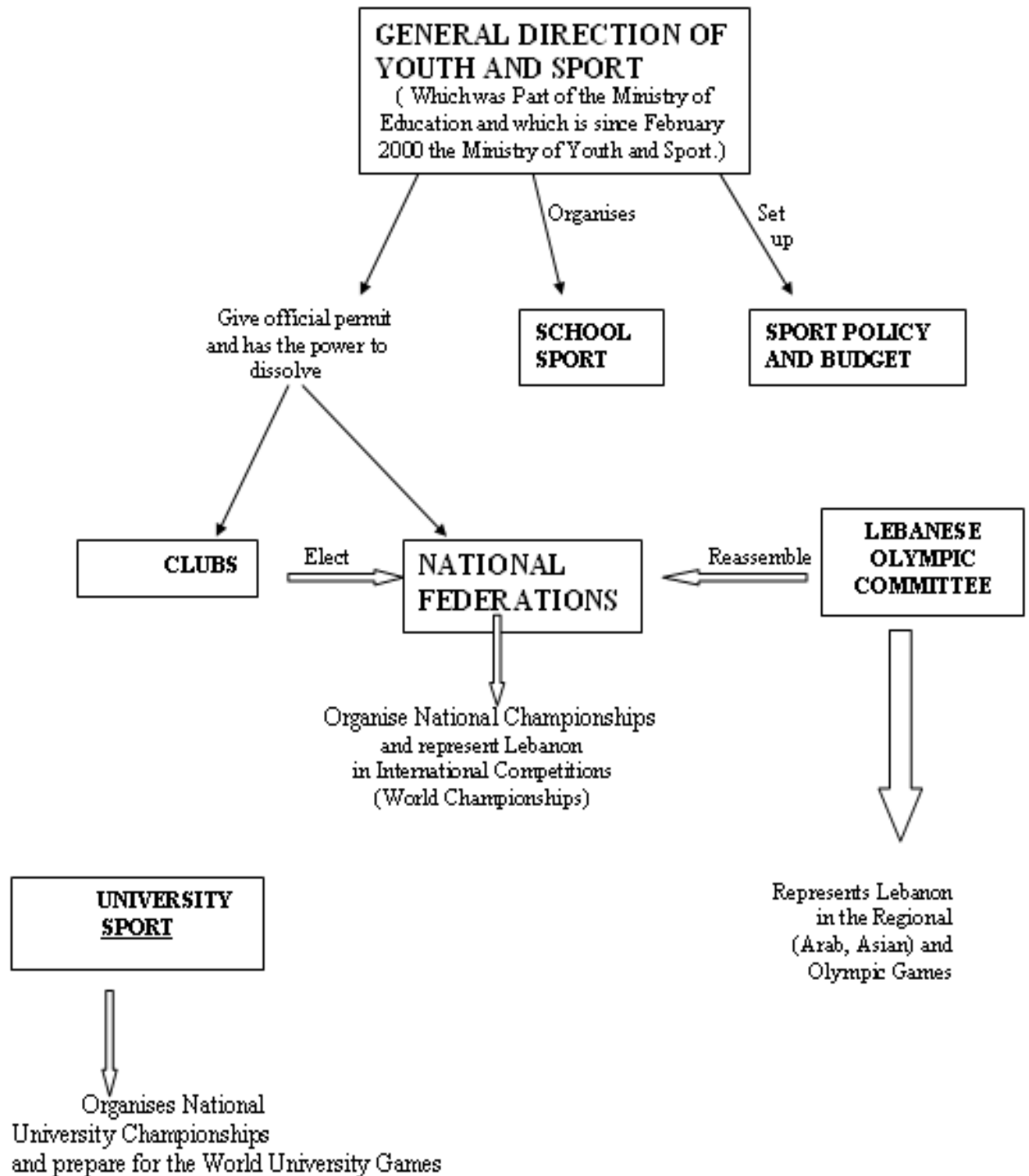


Table 3- The Lebanese Volley-Ball Federation structure

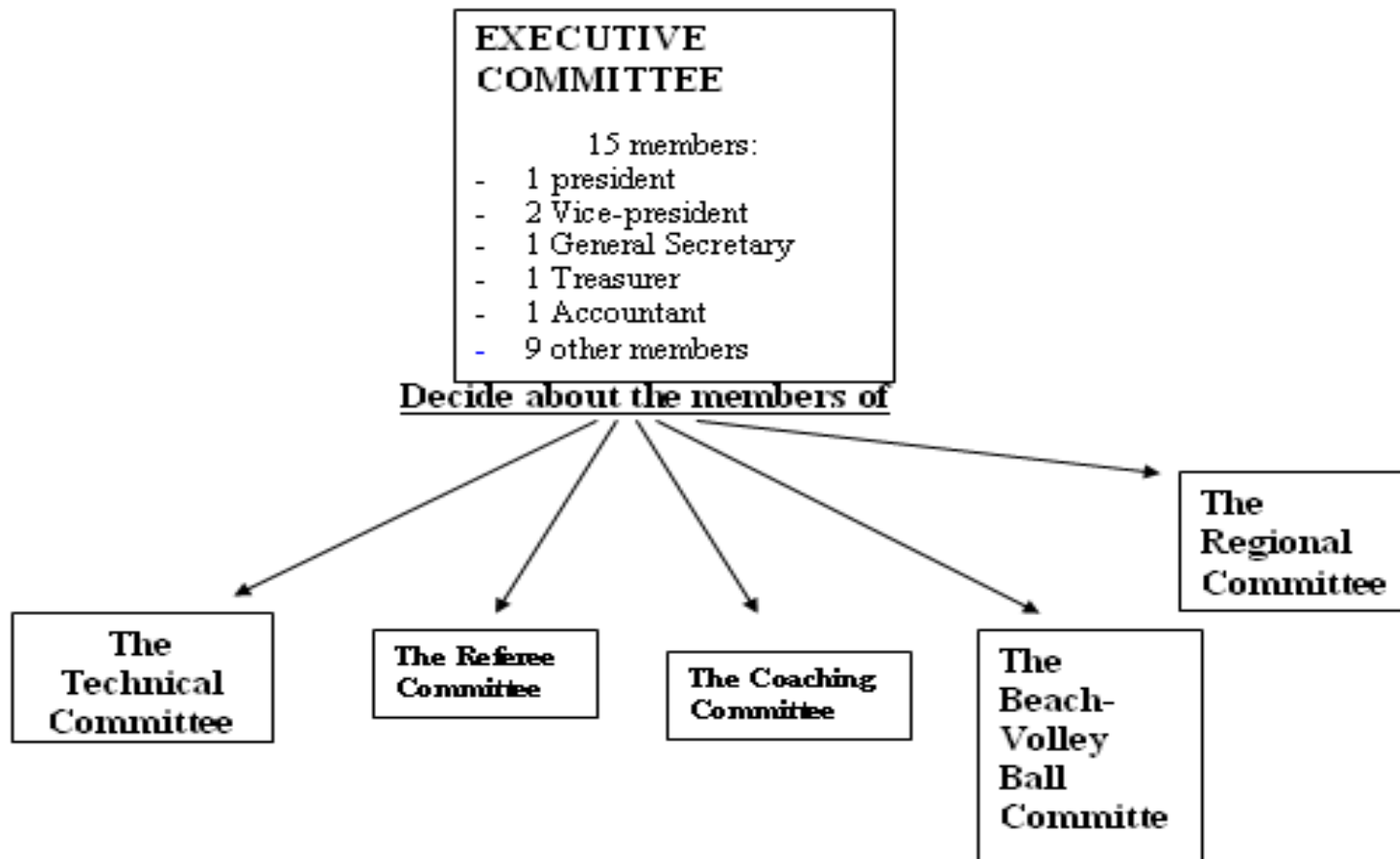


Table 4- The Lebanese Judo Federation structure

Members:

- President.
- General Secretary
- Accountant
- Vice-President
- Treasurer
- 2 members

Table 5- The Lebanese Squash Federation structure

Members:

- President.
- Vice-President
- General Secretary
- Treasurer
- Accountant
- 2 members

Table 6- The Lebanese Canoe-Kayak Federation structure

Members :

- President
- Vice-president
- General Secretary
- 4 members

Table 7- The Lebanese Football Federation sport structure

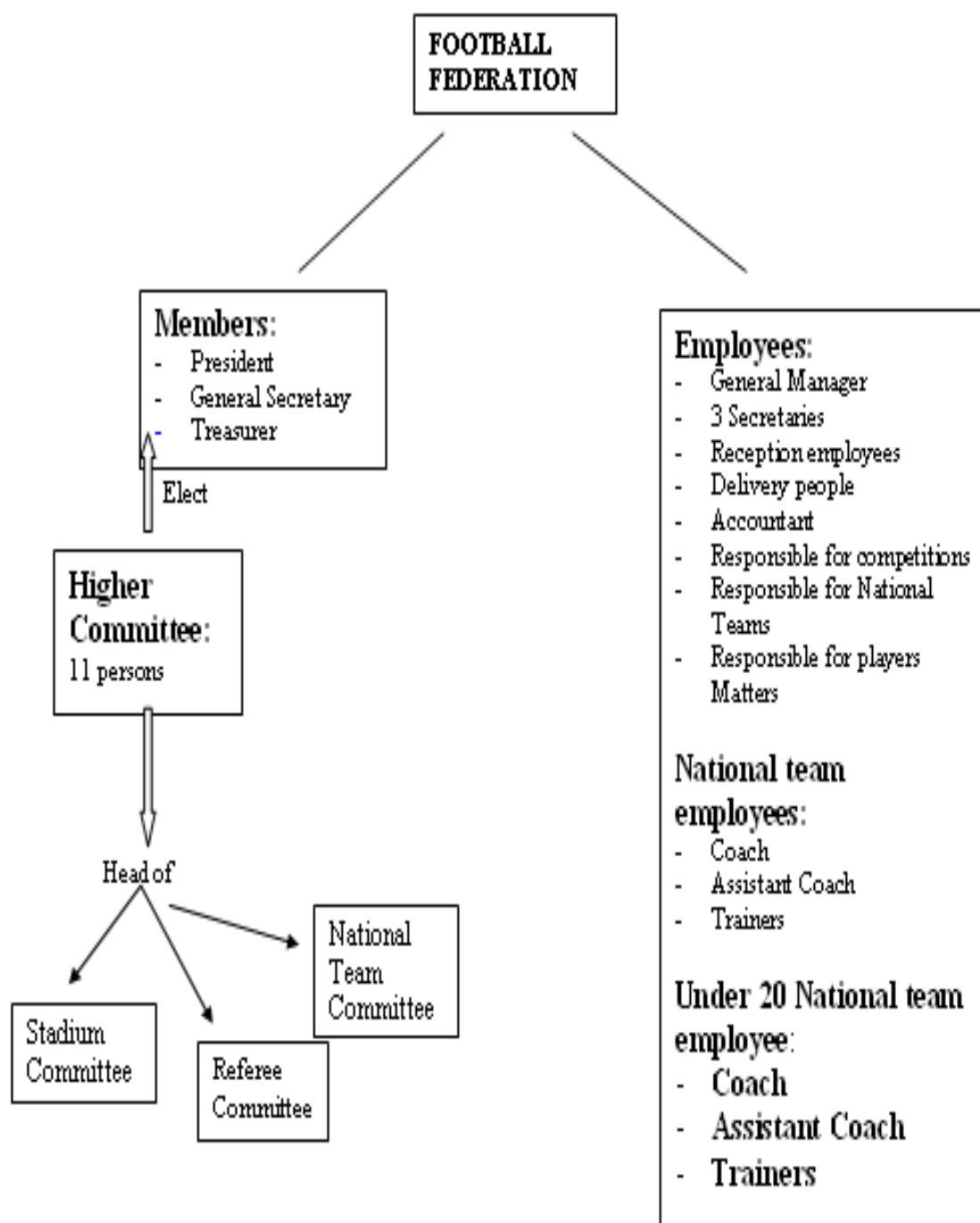


Table 8- The Lebanese sport spiral of difficulties

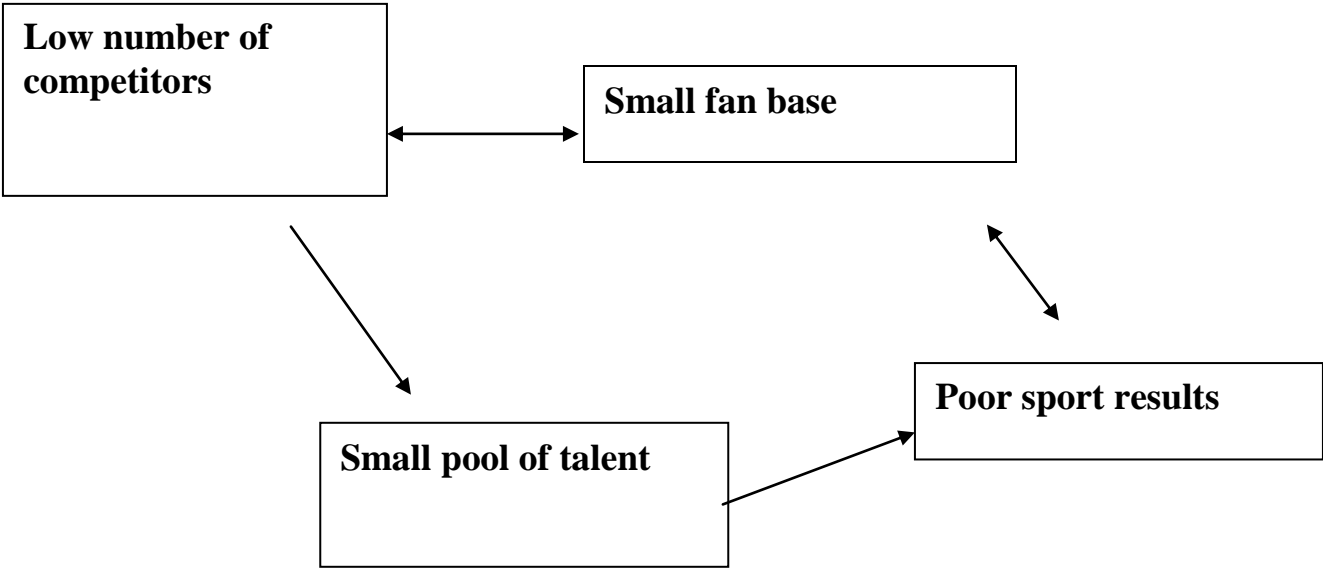


Table 9- Comparison between Lebanon and France

| | Average budget a year: | Number of licensees: | Number of clubs: | World ranking: | Compared to France: |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Canoe-kayak | \$2000- \$3000 | “Very Small” | 6 | Very far from the top level | |
| Football | \$1 Million | 7000 | 150 | 116 upon 200 | Ranked 2 nd , has 2066399 licensees and 19731 clubs |
| Judo | Usually nothing | 400-500 | 25 | “Not bad” | World leader, has 800000 licensees |
| Squash | \$2000 | 180 | 9 | In the “lowest category” | Has an athlete ranked number 1, has 21655 licensees and 382 clubs |
| Athletics | 50-\$60000 | 600 to 700 | 18 | “Very far from the world level” | Organiser of the last world cup, has 177509 licensees |
| Volley-Ball | \$150000 | 6000 | 218 | “Very far from the World level” | Bronze medalist in the last world cup, Has 101343 licensees and 1816 clubs |
| Wushu | 6 to \$7000 | 7 to 800 | 13 | 27 upon 76 | |

Table 10- List of the presidents and general secretaries of 34 of the 35 Lebanese sport federations (the President and the General Secretary of the Judo Federation were not known at that time due to an internal conflict inside the federation)

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <u>Athletics</u> : President: Christian | General Secretary: Christian. |
| <u>Volley Ball</u> : President: Christian | General Secretary: Christian. |
| <u>Bridge</u> : President: Christian | General Secretary: Muslim. |
| <u>Tae kwon do</u> : President: Christian | General Secretary: Christian. |
| <u>Rowing</u> : President: Moslem | General Secretary: Moslem. |
| <u>Skiing</u> : President: Christian | General Secretary: Christian. |
| <u>Water Skiing</u> : President: Christian | General Secretary: Christian. |
| <u>Gymnastics</u> : President: Moslem | General Secretary: Christian. |
| <u>Modern Pentathlon</u> : President: Christian. | |
| <u>Cycling</u> : President: Christian | General Secretary: Christian. |
| <u>Weightlifting</u> : President: Moslem | General Secretary: Moslem. |

Shooting: President: **Christian**

General Secretary: **Christian.**

Badminton: President: **Moslem**

General Secretary: **Moslem.**

Swimming: President: **Christian**

General Secretary: **Moslem.**

Squash: President: **Moslem**

General Secretary: **Moslem.**

Fencing: President: **Druze**

General Secretary: **Christian.**

Horse riding: President: **Christian**

General Secretary: **Christian.**

Kick Boxing: President: **Moslem**

General Secretary: **Moslem.**

Archery: President: **Christian**

General Secretary: **Moslem.**

Karate: President: **Christian**

General Secretary: **Christian.**

Basketball: President: **Christian**

General Secretary: **Christian.**

Tennis: President: **Christian**

General Secretary: **Christian.**

Handball: President: **Moslem**

General Secretary: **Moslem.**

Table Tennis: President: **Christian**

General Secretary: **Christian.**

Football: President: **Moslem**

General Secretary: **Druze.**

Wrestling: President: **Moslem**

General Secretary: **Moslem.**

Boxing: President: **Moslem**

General Secretary: **Moslem.**

Wushu: President: **Christian**

General Secretary: **Christian.**

Sailing: President: **Christian**

General Secretary: **Christian.**

Chess: President: **Moslem**

General Secretary: **Moslem.**

Canoe-Kayak: President: **Moslem**

General Secretary: **Moslem.**

Thai-Boxing: President: **Moslem**

General Secretary: **Christian.**

Sport for the handicapped: President: **Moslem** General Secretary: **Moslem.**

Dancing: President: **Christian**

General Secretary: **Christian.**

Table 11- The effects of the religious division of Lebanese sport

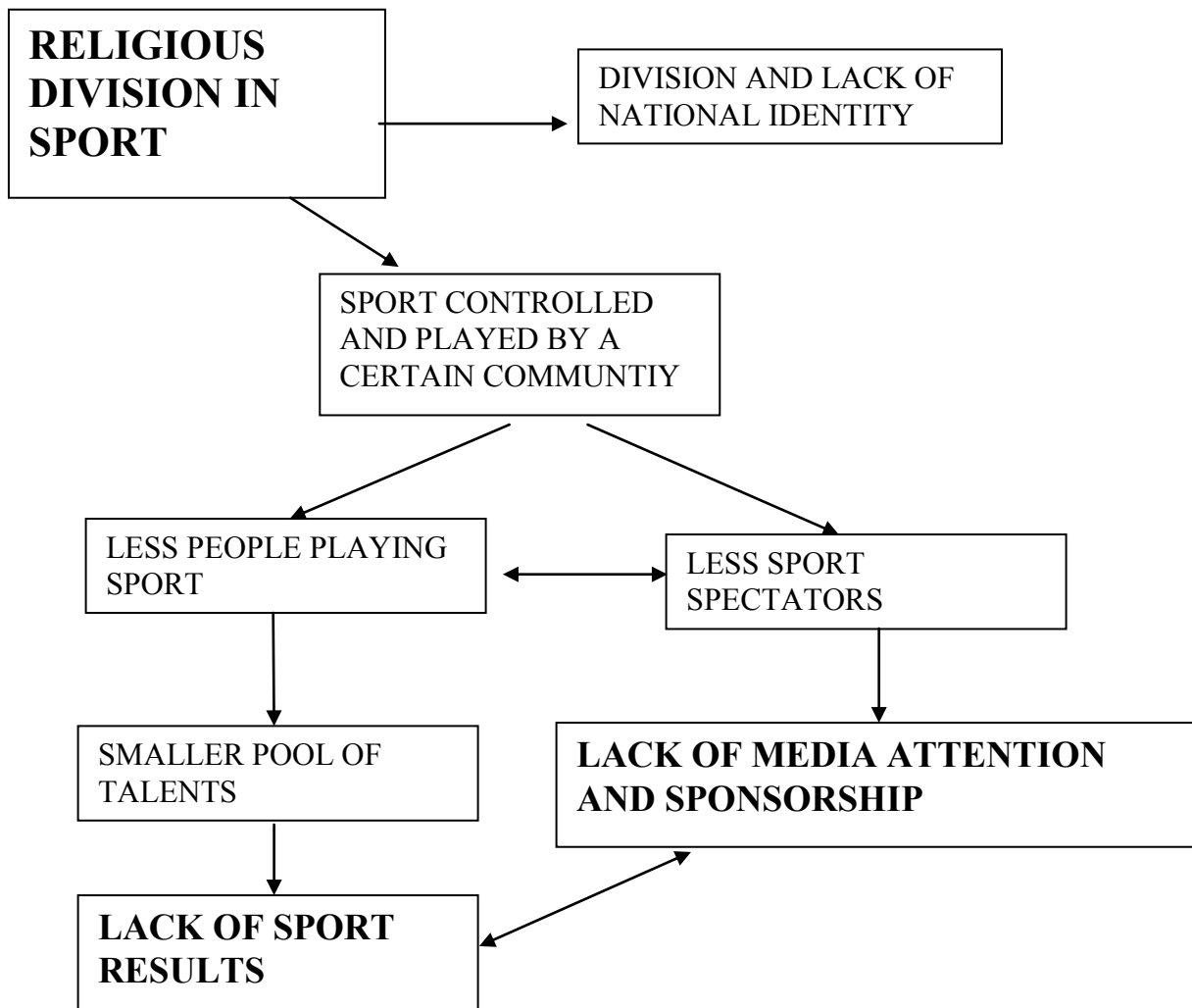


Table 12- Goal of an efficient sport policy

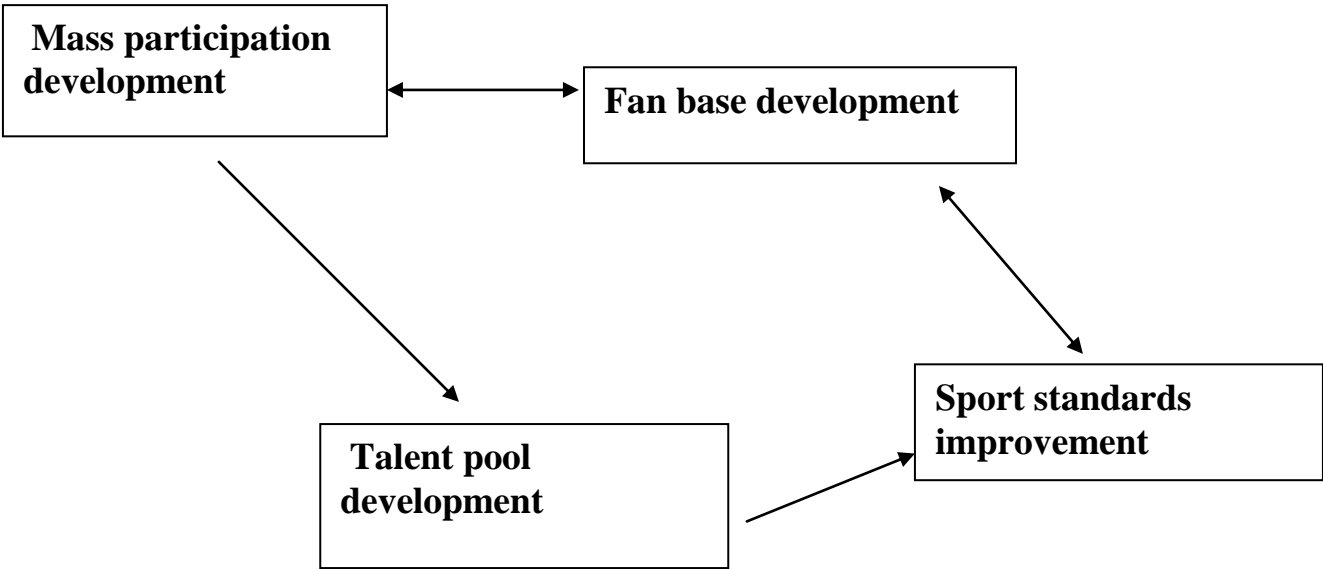


Table 13- The French pyramid of sport success

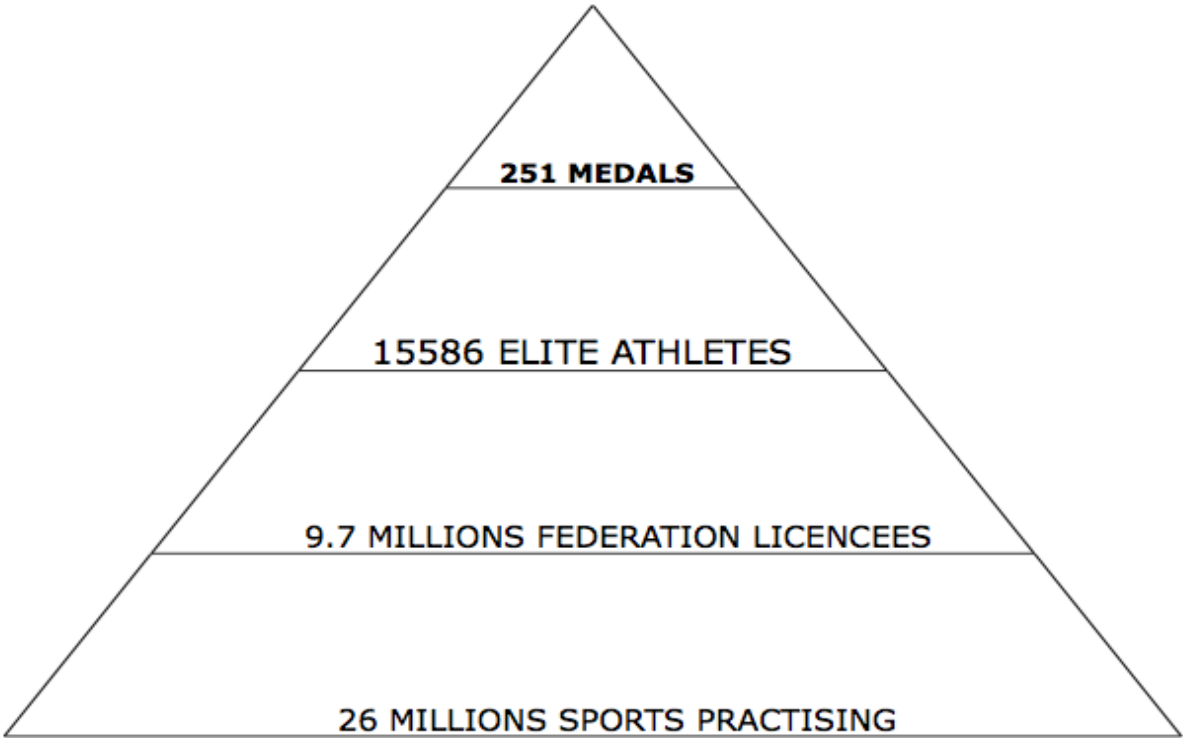


Table 14 – France results in the Summer Olympics from 1948 to 2004

| Summer Games | Medals won: | Ranking: | Upper Ranking Percentile: | |
|------------------|--|------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| 1948 London | 10 Gold – 6 Silver – 13 Bronze TOTAL: 29 | 3 rd upon 59 | 5.08% | CRISIS |
| 1952 Helsinki | 6 Gold – 6 Silver – 6 Bronze TOTAL: 18 | 7 th upon 69 | 10.14% | |
| 1956 Melbourne | 4 Gold – 4 Silver – 6 Bronze TOTAL: 14 | 11 th upon 72 | 15.28% | |
| 1960 Rome | 0 Gold – 2 Silver – 3 Bronze TOTAL: 5 | 25 th upon 83 | 30.12% | |
| 1964 Tokyo | 1 Gold – 8 Silver – 6 Bronze TOTAL: 15 | 21 st upon 93 | 22.58% | |
| 1968 Mexico | 7 Gold – 3 Silver – 5 Bronze TOTAL: 15 | 6 th upon 112 | 5.36% | 1970: Creation of the INSEP |
| 1972 Munich | 2 Gold – 4 Silver – 7 Bronze TOTAL: 13 | 17 th upon 121 | 14.05% | |
| 1976 Montreal | 2 Gold – 3 Silver – 4 Bronze TOTAL: 9 | 15 th upon 92 | 16.3% | |
| 1980 Moscow | 6 Gold – 5 Silver – 3 Bronze TOTAL: 14 | 8 th upon 80 | 10% | |
| 1984 Los Angeles | 5 Gold – 7 Silver – 16 Bronze TOTAL: 28 | 12 th upon 140 | 8.57% | |
| 1988 Seoul | 6 Gold – 4 Silver – 6 Bronze TOTAL: 16 | 9 th upon 159 | 5.66% | |
| 1992 Barcelona | 8 Gold – 5 Silver – 16 Bronze TOTAL: 29 | 9 th upon 169 | 5.32% | |
| 1996 Atlanta | 15 Gold – 7 Silver – 15 Bronze TOTAL: 37 | 5 th upon 197 | 2.54% | |
| 2000 Sydney | 13 Gold – 14 Silver – 11 Bronze TOTAL: 38 | 6 th upon 199 | 3.01% | |
| 2004 Athens | 11 Gold – 9 Silver – 13 Bronze TOTAL: 33 | 7 th upon 201 | 3.48% | |

Table 15 – Herzog’s strategy

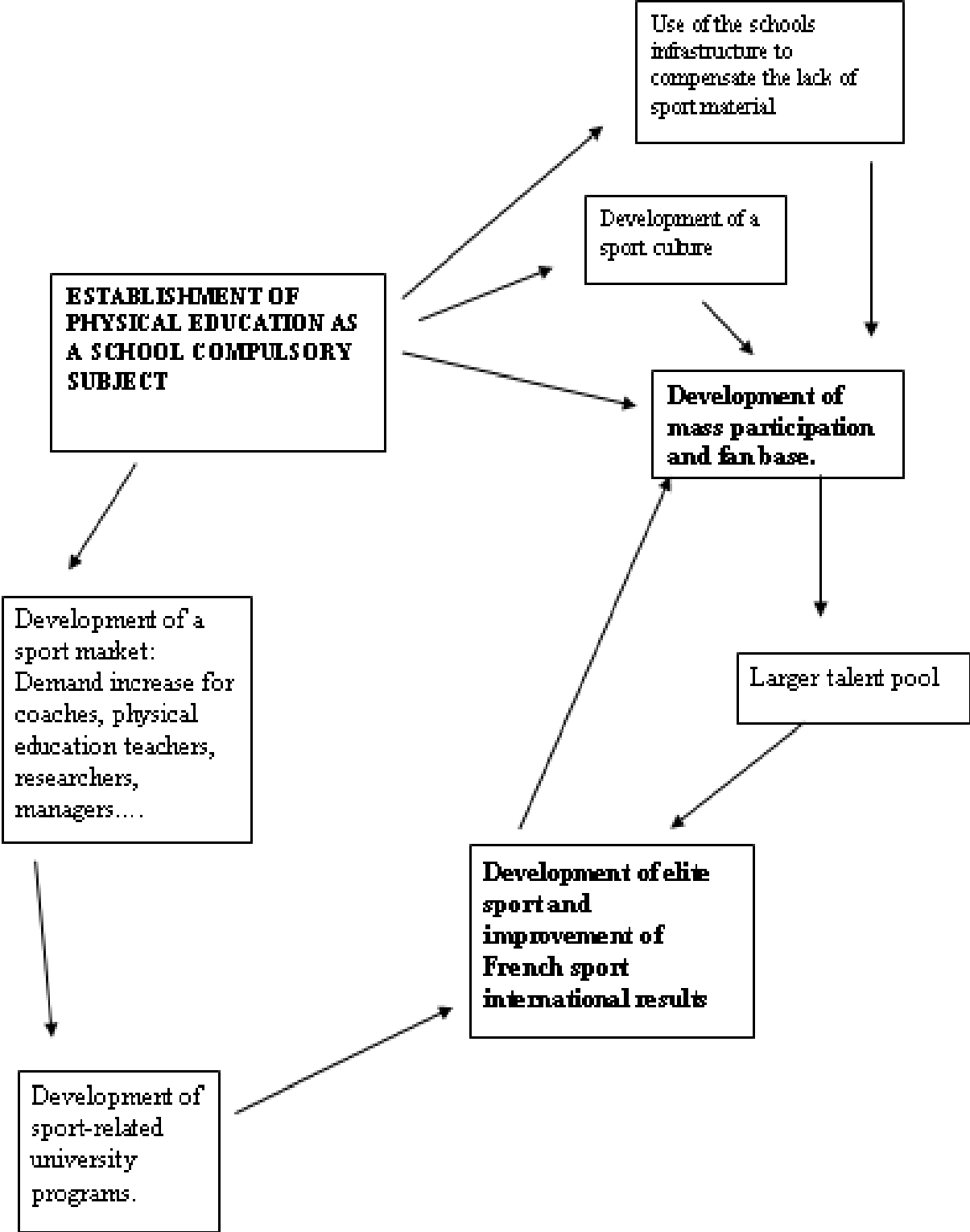


Table 16 – The Lebanese sport vicious circle

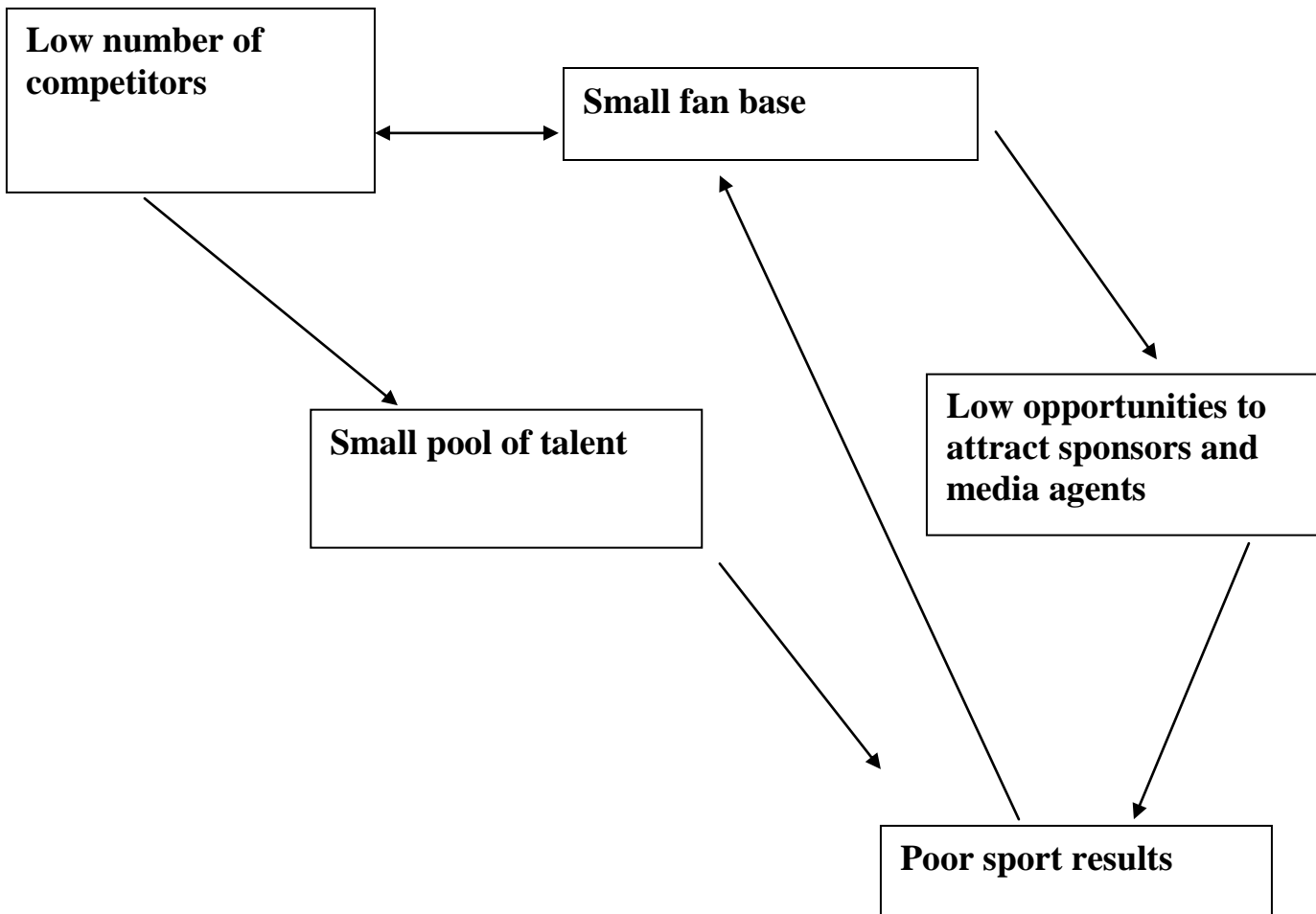


Table 17 – Effects expected from the establishment of PES as a Lebanese baccalaureate subject

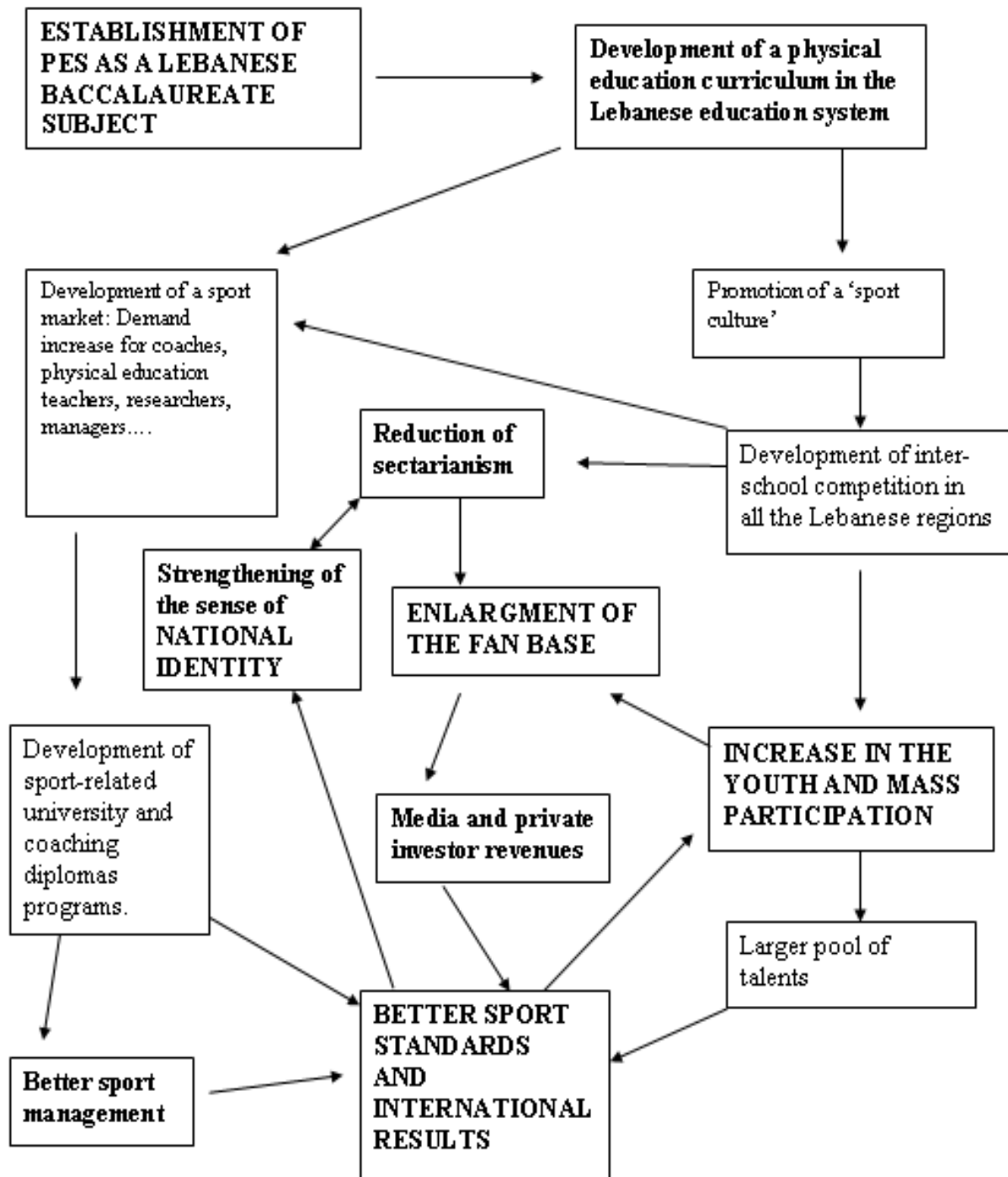


Table 18 – Feasibility study agenda

| Tasks | Outputs |
|---|---|
| 1- Contact of similar sport organisations. Examples: - INSEP France - Irish National Coaching and Training Centre - ASPIRE Qatar 2- Host of foreign expert delegations | Establish potential partnerships and final specific report |
| 3- Recruitment of permanent and visiting personnel 4- Selection of site 5- Ordering equipment 6- Setting administration and hierarchy with rules organisation chart. | Put the Lebanese centre of sport performance ready to function |

Table 19 – Project timescale

| Timescale | Measures taken | Objectives |
|----------------------|---|--|
| 5 to 10 years | Establishment of PES as an optional subject in the Lebanese Baccalaureate. | Develop the Lebanese sport movement fan base, mass participation and standards. |
| 10 years | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Offer of financial purses for the elite athletes. - Establishment of the elite athletes official list by the government. - Elaboration and inauguration of the Lebanese centre of sport excellence. | Develop the elite sport structure standards. |
| 10 years | Development of the Lebanese centre of sport excellence. | Obtainment of regular Lebanese international sport results, strengthening of the sport movement fan base, mass participation and reinforcement of the sense of national identity. |

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INTERVIEWS

All interviews conducted in accordance with the University's Human Research Ethics policy.

1- Interviews done face-to-face

- Interview to judo elite athlete Wissam Abi Nader done in 10 May 2003, in Beirut, Lebanon (Mtaileb Country Club, Beirut suburbs, Lebanon).
- Interview to football elite athlete Hassan Ayoub done in 18 May 2003 in Beirut, Lebanon (Bank of Beirut and of the Arab Countries, Beirut, Lebanon).
- Interview to ski elite athlete Cesar Keyrouz done in 10 February 2003, in Beirut, Lebanon (Keyrouz' private home, Beirut suburbs, Lebanon).
- Interview to squash elite athlete Joy Khoury done in 1 February 2003, in Beirut, Lebanon (Khoury's private home, Beirut, Lebanon).
- Interview to swimming elite athlete Sevak Demerdjian done in 23 April 2003, in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon (Demerdjian's private office, Beirut, Lebanon).
- Interview to tae kwon Do elite athlete Noel Mokhaiber done in 20 May 2003, in Beirut, Lebanon (Eastwood College, Beirut suburbs, Lebanon).
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- Interview to the Lebanese Judo Federation President François Saade done in 14 May 2003, in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon (Lebanese Judo Federation headquarters, Beirut suburbs).
- Interview to the Lebanese Squash Federation Vice-President Roy Di Ferro done in 12 February 2003, in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon (Di Ferro's private home, suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon).
- Interview to the Lebanese Volleyball Federation Wallid Younes done in 5 June 2003, in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon (Lebanese Volleyball Federation headquarters, Beirut suburbs).
- Interview to the Lebanese Wushu Federation General Secretary George Nseir done in 3 February 2003, in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon (Antonins Club, Beirut suburbs, Lebanon).
- Interview to the person in charge of squash in 'The Escape' club Georges El- Hajj done in 18 February 2003 in Beirut, Lebanon ('The Escape' club, Beirut suburbs).
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2- Electronic (telephone and e-mail) interviews

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- Interview to Alexandra Russell, UK (United Kingdom) Sport administrator, done in 4 September 2006.
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- Interview to Dany Kazandjian, the President of the Lebanese Rugby League's Foundation, done in 20 September 2003.
- Interview to Elie Chalhoub, head of physical education the 'Frères Ain- Toura' school, done in 27 May 2007.
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- Interview to football coach Antoine Abi Rashed, done in 28 September 2005.
- Interview to Georges Habeyeb, head of physical education in the Notre- Dame of Jamhour school, done in 3 March 2007.
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